

Israeli Druze upset over editor

TEL AVIV (R) — The spiritual leader of Israel's Druze minority assailed Israel Television Wednesday for suspending a Druze news editor over a magazine article he wrote criticising police for killing Arabs. Israel Broadcasting Authority's (IBA) executive committee which controls the state television suspended Rafik Halabi late Tuesday from his job as editor of the main nightly news show. One committee member accused him of incitement. "This is a difficult blow for the Druze in general in Israel. This was a crude decision," said Sheikh Amin Tarif, spiritual leader of the Druze. The dispute arose from an article Halabi wrote in an Arabic weekly magazine criticising Israeli police for the Oct. 8 massacre in Jerusalem. About 1.5 per cent of Israel's 4.7 million citizens are Druze, in the army. Halabi was chief editor of Mabat, a half-hour nightly news programme which is widely viewed in Israel. Aaron Arel, an executive committee member from the Labour Party, said he was working to reverse the decision.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

Tunisia sentences spy to death

TUNIS (R) — A Tunisian diplomat has been sentenced to death for spying and his relatives said he was accused of passing secret documents to U.S. diplomats. Official sources and lawyers said a criminal court in Tunis sentenced Lamine Dali, 58, Tuesday evening after a one-day trial closed to the press and public. Mohammad Ksouri, one of Dali's lawyers, said Dali had appealed against the verdict. He denied reports by Dali's relatives that he would be executed at dawn on Thursday. The diplomat, who was deputy director for African affairs at the Foreign Ministry in Tunis, was arrested at home on Oct. 16. The government newspaper La Presse said he was caught about to hand documents to agents of a foreign power. His lawyers declined to implicate the United States but Dali's Belgian-based brother-in-law, Nouredine Ferjani, alleged that U.S. diplomats had visited him at home on Oct. 16 and the authorities had used this as the basis of their case. The Tunisian authorities have also not identified the United States as the foreign power involved but they have not denied published reports implicating the U.S. embassy.

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Tunisian Islamists say 200 detained

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia's main Islamic movement said Wednesday the authorities had detained more than 200 members and sympathisers in a campaign which started Sunday night. Sources close to the government have said the detentions are the result of inquiries into a group of Islamic militants arrested with arms and explosives in November. But the Nahdha (Renaissance) movement, which is not recognised by the government, said Wednesday the aim of the campaign was "to eliminate everyone who believes in freedom... and marginalise real and active social forces so the ruling party can completely monopolise decision making." The detainees include the movement's official spokesman Ali Laaridh, and Ziad Doulati, a member of the executive bureau, who were both arrested Sunday.

Iraq accuses Egypt of 'cultural terrorism'

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq accused Egypt Wednesday of "cultural terrorism" in barring it from the Cairo International Book Fair next month. The Iraqi News Agency said 74 packages of Iraqi books sent through Amman to Cairo for the fair had been turned back. It said fair organisers had invited Iraq to take part. The agency quoted a senior publishing official as saying "what the authorities of (Egyptian President) Hosni Mubarak have done is classified as cultural terrorism."

Gorbachev names deputy from party

MOSCOW (R) — President Mikhail Gorbachev was granted broader powers to restore order in the Soviet Union on Wednesday and quickly nominated a man from the Communist Party hierarchy to the newly-created post of vice-president. The powers, formally approved by the Congress of People's Deputies, make Gorbachev, on paper, the most powerful leader in the communist state's history. He insists the new structure is vital to protect against "dark forces" stalking the country (see page 8). Gennady Yanayev, nominated vice-president, told the congress Gorbachev would not abuse his new position, which gives him decisive influence in all spheres of economic and political life. "If anybody tries to suggest to me that Gorbachev is keeping some political monster in the shadows and with his help will introduce some draconian order, then I say this is nonsense," said Yanayev, a grey-haired former chief of the trade union movement.

French police deny PLO received bomb

PARIS (R) — Police were called to the home of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) representative in Paris, Ibrahim Soussa, after he reported receiving a suspicious parcel, the French Interior Ministry said Wednesday. The parcel was found to contain books, a spokesman said. He denied a report carried by the PLO news agency Wafa in Tunis that police blew up a parcel bomb delivered to the PLO's Paris office.

Iran says diplomats smuggle antiques

NICOSIA (R) — Diplomats from 25 countries have been involved in smuggling antiques out of Iran, intelligence ministry officials said Wednesday. The two officials, quoted by the Iranian news agency IRNA, did not disclose the diplomats' nationalities. But they told a Tehran news conference a number of Iranian officials involved in the racket had been detained. Among the confiscated items shown reporters was the well-preserved corpse of an old woman estimated to have died about 700 to 900 years ago, said IRNA. The body was dug out of a grave in the central desert province of Yazd. The officials added that antiques seized from five suspects were worth at least 650 billion rials

U.S.: No dates set for talks with Iraq

Baghdad rejects shift in its position

Combined agency dispatches

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT said Wednesday that Iraq had not agreed to a date for talks with Secretary of State James Baker, contrary to a report issued by an Israeli newspaper.

The Israeli daily Maariv reported Wednesday that Baker likely will meet Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in Baghdad on Jan. 9.

Iraq had proposed a meeting with Baker on Jan. 12, but President George Bush rejected that date as too close to Jan. 15, the date by which the United Nations says Iraq must withdraw its troops from Kuwait or face the possible use of force. Bush said the latest possible date for such a meeting was Jan. 3.

U.S. State Department spokesman Sandra McCarthy responded Wednesday to the Maariv report by saying that "there has been no Iraqi movement on the question of dates."

She said U.S. diplomats in Baghdad had been in almost daily contact with Iraqi officials in an attempt to resolve the issue.

A White House official said the contacts were taking place through Joseph Wilson, the U.S. charge d'affaires in Baghdad.

Maariv quoted as its source Israeli diplomats it said were briefed by U.S. counterparts on talks between Washington and Baghdad to arrange a Baker

meeting with President Saddam.

The newspaper said: "U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will apparently go to Baghdad Jan. 9 for meeting with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in a last-minute effort to find a compromise in the Gulf crisis."

The newspaper said the sources believed Baker would accept the date despite its closeness to the Jan. 15 deadline.

Bush has proposed sending Baker to meet Saddam in Baghdad after a preliminary visit to Washington by Iraq's foreign minister, Tariq Aziz.

Attempts to set up the talks have been stalemated by failure to agree on dates for the visits. Iraq says it will not have its president's schedule dictated by Washington, which has said it wanted a date no later than Jan. 3 for Baker to meet Saddam in Baghdad.

In Baghdad, Charge d'Affaires Wilson said he still hoped for a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis.

With 20 days left before the U.N. deadline, Wilson told reporters: "I have not given up hope on the diplomatic process."

Saddam, in an interview with Mexican television shown Tuesday night, said Iraq would not change its position on dates for high-level talks proposed a month ago by Bush.

"As far as we are concerned, we have decided that the date of

the interview will be Jan. 12."

Saddam told Mexican television. Saddam said in the interview that Kuwait's ousted ruling family would never return to govern.

"We say that with the help of God, with the help of the bones of the Arab Nation... they will never again rule in our country," Saddam said, describing exiled Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah as corrupt.

"The Kuwaiti sheikh used to marry every Thursday," Saddam said. "He got to the point where he was unable to distinguish between his wives and daughters..."

"This is the kind of ally sought by the United States and Bush, the leader of the mightiest power in the world, a country that has made tremendous progress in other fields."

"This kind of person and ruler, the sheikh of Kuwait, cannot be permitted to participate in deceiving the Arabs."

"It is to defend such corrupt people that the United States has sent its troops to be killed. The United States is willing to lead all of mankind to the verge of war and catastrophe."

Saddam said U.S. forces in the Gulf, expected to number more than 400,000 by Jan. 15, would be defeated if war broke out.

"The U.S. army does not believe in what it is doing and it has no right to do it. Because it has

(Continued on page 3)

Israeli troops kill Palestinian in Shati

OCCUPIED GAZA STRIP (R) — Israeli troops Wednesday shot dead a Palestinian who allegedly stabbed and wounded three Israeli soldiers in the occupied Gaza Strip on the eve of his wedding, an army spokesman said.

Arab doctors who saw the dead man's body said he was shot by more than 20 bullets from automatic rifles in the seaside Shati refugee camp.

The killing took place about 500 metres from a hospital where senior Israeli military officials were attending a ceremony to inaugurate a new wing.

The army said a Shati resident knifed soldiers on patrol wounding two moderately and one lightly.

The killing sparked clashes between young Palestinians and soldiers in Shati, residents said.

Relatives identified the Palestinian as Alaa Abdul Latif Obeid, 25, and described him as a devout Muslim who was to marry on

Thursday.

Residents said Obeid may have stabbed the soldiers as an act of patriotism ahead of his marriage.

Palestinians in the occupied territories waging the three-year-old uprising have increased attacks on Israeli soldiers, police and civilians since the Oct. 8 massacre riots in which police killed over 20 Palestinians.

Eight Israelis have been killed in the attacks over the past two-and-a-half months.

In the southern Gaza refugee camp of Rafah, Israeli forces shot and wounded a masked Palestinian in an ambush, Palestinian sources said.

Residents said the man was shot while writing graffiti to mark the upcoming anniversary of the founding of Fatah, the mainstream Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) faction, they said.

The army said its forces shot and moderately wounded a resident in Rafah.

Palestinians said 20 Rafah residents were wounded in clashes with the army sparked by the shooting.

In the occupied West Bank city of Hebron, Israeli soldiers shot an elderly Palestinian man in the head, seriously wounding him, witnesses said.

He was identified as Abdallah Hamdan, 60, former director of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Hebron. Witnesses said he did not obey an army order to stop and was shot in his car.

Three Jewish West Bank settlers were freed from prison Wednesday after serving less than seven years of a life term for killing three Palestinian students and maiming two West Bank mayors in the early 1980s.

Scores of chanting and dancing settlers carried the three on their shoulders out of Maasiyeh prison in the central town of Ramle. (see page 2)

Israel plans 2,200 new apartments in occupied lands

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Legislators

accused the Israeli government Wednesday of risking U.S. aid for absorbing Soviet immigrants, by erecting hundreds of trailer homes and apartments in the occupied territories.

About 100,000 Israelis live among 1.7 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The United States objects to these settlements and considers them an obstacle to peace efforts.

Haim Oron of the Socialist Mapam Party said Housing Minister Ariel Sharon told parliament's Finance Committee Monday that 1,000 trailers and another 1,200 apartments would be set up in the West Bank and Gaza in the coming year.

Another 300 trailer homes have been moved into occupied territories in the past year, Oron quoted Sharon as adding.

Oron said Sharon insisted the government was not steering Soviet immigrants to the occupied territories, in keeping with American conditions for \$100

million in loan guarantees voted by Congress this year.

But Oron argued that a housing shortage in Israel could easily propel immigrants to the occupied territories.

"People go where there are apartments, whether they are immigrants or old timers," Oron said.

"Sharon never said it was being built for immigrants, but I think he's putting the issue at risk, since the Americans are unequivocally against their money reaching the territories," Oron added.

A communique from Sharon's office said a total of 33,000 trailers were to be purchased over the next year but did not say where they would be parked.

Sharon's spokesman, Nimrod Granit, was not available at his office to comment.

Sharon, a former defence minister, has spearheaded the Jewish settlement effort in the occupied territories since 1977, when he first joined an Israeli cabinet as agriculture minister. Labour leader Shimon Peres

has also accused the government of indirectly pushing immigrants to move to the occupied territories by moving trailers there.

"Once the trailers are built there they will say, we have no choice, the immigrants have no place to live and they will be forced to move there," Peres was quoted as telling a party forum Dec. 13.

Soviet immigration has totalled more than 170,000 this year, and housing starts have fallen far short of demand.

Immigrant families are doubling up in apartments in some Israeli towns, and many arriving in the past month have been put up temporarily in hotels and army bases.

Construction of housing planned for inside Israel has been lagging.

Israeli reports say construction is underway on less than half of 15,000 apartments planned for this year.

They said Sharon promised the committee that all would be in the building process by the end of the fiscal year in April

Crown Prince says diplomatic means not resorted to in Gulf peace efforts

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday called on all parties involved in the Gulf crisis to give political options the chance to succeed.

Any unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait should lead to direct negotiations and understanding among the two parties, Iraq and Kuwait, the Prince said in an interview with the Japanese Kyodo news agency.

He warned that unless enough attention was given to dialogue, it would be very difficult for the situation to be averted from moving towards violence and war.

The prince called for effective discussion in European and the U.S. Congress on the situation in the Gulf and the possibility of war in the region.

Noting that Iraq has said that it is committed in principle to a negotiated solution to the crisis, the Crown Prince said: "There must be an official and dignified echo to their viewpoint."

The Crown Prince said statements by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker that partial withdrawal was not enough obstructed the process of even a partial withdrawal.

The Crown Prince said Jordan would not allow itself to be used as a passageway for anyone.

In reply to a question, he said: "The issue is not whether we are

with them (the United States) or against them. We agree with them in democracy and social justice but we disagree with them in views. And for this reason we didn't participate in the multi-national forces stationed in the Gulf," he said.

Prince Hassan deplored the recent U.N. Security Council resolution on protection of Palestinians in the occupied territories because it lacks reference to the long-awaited Mideast peace conference.

The Prince said Jordan was planning to arrange a round-table conference by Jan. 5 to review the Kingdom's economic conditions resulting from the Gulf crisis.

He said he was impressed by Japan's prompt response to Jordan's calls for help due to the crisis.

Following is the text of the interview in a question and answer form:

Q: It seems that the Gulf crisis will be peacefully resolved as a result of the American proposal for direct dialogue with Iraq and the release of all hostages by Iraq. At that time we had believed that there was a secret agreement between the United States and Iraq. Is that a misunderstanding?

A: There is a feeling that the U.S. will hang tough on the political and military decision making on behalf of the alliance until the 15th of January. Hanging tough does not exclude direct talks. So in a sense we have this contradiction. Both sides escalating their rhetoric, a very personalised and very heated exchange, both sides at the same time stating they do not exclude direct talks. So it is

contradictory but at the same time I think all eyes are on what happens after the 15th. This does not exclude, God forbid, the possibility of a freak incident starting a conflict but it would seem the 15th is the deadline to which the United States has committed itself on behalf of the alliance.

The statements in particular with reference to the possible involvement of Israel in a broader conflict have underlined what we have said for the last three months that unless and until focus is given to the direct issue i.e. the Iraq-Kuwait conflict, it is very very difficult indeed to avoid a situation of generalised instability and violence in the broader Middle East region.

Q: So what is Jordan going to do until January 15 for a peaceful solution or to avoid war after Jan. 15?

A: Clearly our contact with the Algerian leadership continues clearly as the situation escalates in terms of accusations and counter-accusations. Clearly, as we come closer to the deadline of military action, the situation will invite a greater debate and in particular I believe in Europe and in the continuing discussion in the U.S. Congress.

Q: Do you support the idea of a mini-Arab summit among Iraq and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, or the PLO and Jordan, or other parties concerned?

A: I would not specify individual participants but I believe that any inter-Arab meeting would be welcome provided the mind-set, the psychology of war, changes to invite

an exhaustion of the diplomatic option. Today the diplomatic option has not even been adequately explored, let alone exhausted.

I would say again, as I have said many times, non-conditional withdrawal should lead to an understanding between the belligerents, Iraq and Kuwait, most directly. If you recall the international troop movement was intended to secure the defence of Saudi Arabia — this has been achieved — and to work towards the restoration of Kuwait. Up to this moment one hopes that the presence of these overwhelmingly large forces in the region are diplomacy through other means.

However, as I said, the personalisation of the diplomacy of the air waves, the exchange of insults, the heated rhetoric, the discussion of broader issues including the possibility of the involvement of Israel which means a general war in the Middle East region, is neither called for by the United Nations resolutions nor is it in the broader strategic interest of the world economy or of the world political landscape in the aftermath of the cold war.

Q: How do you think of Iraq's partial withdrawal from Kuwait as a compromise option?

A: I believe that the Iraqis have committed themselves to the principle of withdrawal in discussion with numerous visitors to Baghdad. However, there has to be a dignified hearing. There has to be an official echo. Thus far the statement by

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Brickbats and bouquets for government's information policy in Lower House

By Abdullah Hasanat
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government's information policy came under heavy attack Wednesday from both the left and the right at the Lower House of Parliament.

"The guardians of our media today... are not fit to lead the country's information policy," charged Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Fuad Khalafat in a lengthy statement.

"They assassinated our national identity," the deputy said in a fiery 14-page speech.

"(This is) not fair," countered the prime minister, Mr. Mudar Badran.

"We have a developed and modern media that is recognised by friend and foe alike," Badran said at the end of the four-hour debate. "Our enemies know this," the prime minister added.

The debate on the government's information policy was initiated by Deputy Ahmad Oweidi Abbadi a few weeks ago when he asked the information minister, Mr. Ibrahim Izzeddin, to explain his ministry's policy towards the Gulf crisis.

Izzeddin at that time, as in yesterday's session, said that Jordan's information policy had contributed to a better understanding of Jordan's position.

Fakhri Kaway, a Democratic Bloc deputy from Fuhes, also criticised the government's policy but did not go along with the Brotherhood line.

Commenting on Deputy Khalafat's charge that 70 per cent of Jordan Television programmes were foreign made, Kaway insisted that foreign programmes were useful "to enable

House passes law depriving women of equal share of assets

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday passed a law that deprives women from the same share of land inheritance as stipulated in 1914 Ottoman legislation.

The new law, the Transfer of Fixed Assets Law, decrees that Islamic Sharia and current civil status laws should form the basis for the transfer of private-owned land to the heirs.

The new four-article law cancels in its article 3 the Ottoman law that, according to a government explanatory paper, made equal the share of men and women heirs.

That law contradicts Islamic Sharia and "many Islamic scholars criticised Jordan" for keeping that law in its books, the explanatory paper said in explanation of the reasons behind introducing the new law.

The new law be passed by the House "as proposed by the government, the Legal Committee of the House said in its report to the House.

The committee, headed by Muslim Brotherhood Deputy Ahmad Kofahi, includes members from most political trends in Parliament including Mansour Murrat and Faris Nabulsi from the Democratic Bloc.

Geagea describes new cabinet as blow to peace

GHDRA, Lebanon (R) — The leader of Lebanon's strongest Christian militia said Wednesday the country's new "unity government" was an obstacle to peace.

"The way the government was formed will thwart the (peace) march," Samir Geagea, chief of the 10,000-strong baridline Lebanese Forces (LF) militia, told a news conference.

The LF and its allies the Falange Party have criticised the 30-member cabinet named Monday as being dominated by pro-Syrian groups.

Geagea called on the Arab League committee that sponsored a peace pact for Lebanon last year to meet urgently "to rescue the pact before it is too late."

The pact, signed in the Saudi resort of Taif, proposed formation of a unity cabinet.

It gave the Muslim majority an equal say in Lebanon's Christian-dominated political system, provided for the disbanding of all private armies and envisaged strong relations with Syria.

Newly-appointed Prime Minister Omar Karami formed the cabinet in a bid to bring together Christian and Muslim warlords.

But Geagea said the way Karami was chosen by Syrian-backed President Elias Hrawi, and the nomination of the government, was a "theatrical farce."

He described the new government as "un-Lebanese, unbalanced and full of corrupt ministers."



Samir Geagea

Geagea said he might try to prevent the new cabinet obtaining a vote of confidence from parliament.

"There is a big parliamentary trend against the present government... this administration is a national and political violation to the Taif accord," he said.

Geagea, who married last week, interrupted his honeymoon to head a meeting of Christian leaders Tuesday night to discuss strategy.

Karami included seven militia chiefs in his government, the biggest in Lebanon's history. Three are Muslims and four are Christians.

The only main group excluded is the pro-Iranian Hizbollah, which is believed to be holding 12 Western hostages. The 5,000-strong group wants an Iranian-style Islamic republic in Lebanon.

Khamenei says Rushdie death sentence stands

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Wednesday the death order against British author Salman Rushdie was still in force despite his repentance.

"As the imam (the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini) said, the Islamic decree about the author of 'The Satanic Verses' remains unchanged even if he repents and becomes the most pious man of his time," Tehran Radio quoted him as saying in a statement released by his office.

The Indian-born novelist, in hiding since Khomeini ordered his death for blasphemy 22 months ago, renewed his faith in Islam Monday and disavowed anti-Muslim sentiments expressed by characters in his book.

Tehran Radio quoted Khamenei as saying that "God willing, from now on no one will dare insult the great messenger of God, and Islamic sanctities."

Khamenei said Rushdie's attempts to repent from publication of the book would do him no good.

In his statement Monday, Rushdie stated that he would not seek to have a paperback edition of the novel printed and would not allow its translation into any more languages.

The book has sold one million copies and has been translated into 15 languages.

Mocking Rushdie's gesture, the radical Jomhuri Islami (Islamic Republic) daily stressed that the death sentence was irrevocable, and called on Rushdie to prepare for death.

"If Rushdie's repentance and

his return to Islam are seen as a sign of his braveness, naturally it is necessary that he shows greater braveness and prepares himself for death," the Parsi-language daily said Wednesday.

"He will die anyway but he will be better off to choose his way to eternal salvation courageously before a son of Islam fires the coup de grace," it added.

Rushdie has been in hiding since Khomeini called for his death, and Tehran put a million-dollar bounty on his head.

Iran cut diplomatic ties with Britain over the Rushdie affair saying Britain had defamed Islam by allowing "The Satanic Verses" to be published.

The ties were restored Sept. 27 after British officials publicly conceded the book had offended Muslims and said the government had no wish to do so.

Khamenei said Wednesday that Rushdie's gesture demonstrated that "Western arrogance has been forced to retreat step-by-step."

He added that "the edict, and the commitment of Muslims around the world to implement it, is showing its first results."

Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani, who has attempted to gradually rebuild Iran's ties with the West, has not rescinded the death edict. But his supporters have indicated they are willing to let the decree lapse.

Jomhuri Islami reflects the thinking of hardliners who oppose Rafsanjani's attempts to open up Iran's foreign policy and liberalise Iranian society.

Embargo enforcers block 'peace ship' en route to Basra

BAHRAIN (AP) — Warning shots were fired when crew and members of a female peace delegation aboard an Iraqi vessel resisted a U.S. marine boarding team in a pre-dawn intercept Wednesday.

In a 30-minute fracas the marines, who landed on the ship by helicopter, were forced to fire warning shots, plus a smoke grenade and a noisemaker grenade "for crowd control," said navy spokesman Mark Neuhart.

He said that the trouble started when the boarding party approached the pilot house of the freighter Ben Khaldoun "and a number of the crew attempted to hold the boarding party members back and grab their weapons."

In the process, "one of our guys was knocked over by one of the women." He said no weapons were used against the marines.

The Iraqi master of the Ben Khaldoun claimed that there were "some injuries" during the boarding. "A U.S. navy doctor has been dispatched to investigate," said Neuhart.

The 11,333-tonne general cargo vessel was carrying about 240 passengers and a 40-member Iraqi crew, plus approximately 800 tonnes of sugar, said the navy spokesman.

Iraqi and pro-Iraqi Arab press reports have called the Ben Khaldoun as "the peace ship" and said it was sailing to the Iraqi port of Basra in a demonstration of support for Iraq and its initiatives for solving the Gulf crisis.

Shipping sources estimated the number of the women aboard at 120. They said they were leftists from Arab, European and other countries.

The vessel refused to stop for a search after "repeated requests" when first intercepted by the Australian guided missile frigate HMS Sydney at about 1.45 a.m. (21:45 GMT Tuesday).

Multinational boarding teams of U.S., British and Australian marines were transported to the Ben Khaldoun by small boat and helicopter, according to the U.S. and British reports.

The Sydney, five U.S. warships and the British frigate HMS Brazen were involved in the intercept, part of a four-

month-old embargo in which the U.S. navy alone has challenged 5,888 vessels, boarded 714 and diverted 30 mainly in the Arabian or Red Sea.

A British Defence Ministry spokesman, quoted by the Press Association in London, said that U.S. marines led a joint boarding operation, which included a team from the Brazen and Australian marines.

The British spokesman said the operation was carried out near Masirah Island, off the coast of Oman.

No shots were fired by the British and there were no injuries. The British boarding party was landed on the ship by helicopter, he said.

The Ben Khaldoun, which gave its origin of voyage as Aden, Yemen, and said it was heading for the Iraqi port of Basra, was escorted to a nearby anchorage where it was still held 12 hours later.

The master would have to agree to discharge his sugar cargo before being allowed to proceed through the Hormuz for the trip to Basra, but the passengers could proceed, Neuhart said.

Sugar is covered by the general embargo against shipments to Iraq under U.N. sanctions aimed at pressuring Iraq into ending its occupation of Kuwait.

U.S. navy warships, supported by British, French and other Western naval units, are enforcing the embargo by stopping and searching vessels suspected of carrying prohibited goods to Iraq.

Most of the interceptions are made in the Arabian Sea before the ships pass the Strait of Hormuz to sail up the Gulf to Iraq. Others have been carried out in the Red Sea to prevent goods from reaching through Jordan.

The Ben Khaldoun went through the Suez Canal in mid-December coming from Algeria. Arab press reports had reported.

The reports at the time said the vessel was picking up supporters of Iraq.

Baghdad Radio, monitored in Nicosia said the women aboard the Ben Khaldoun were from 10 Arab countries plus Italy, China, the United States and Japan.

It said the ship was a challenge to all traitors to the Arab Nation and enemies of peace.

Moscow sends two envoys to Iraq amid evacuation plans

MOSCOW (RI) — The Soviet Union has sent two high-ranking envoys to Baghdad and plans to complete evacuation of its nationals from Iraq by Jan. 10, the Foreign Ministry said Wednesday.

Spokesman Vitaly Churkin said the two envoys would meet Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and other senior officials to discuss issues including the evacuation plans.

Asked if they would help negotiate a settlement to the Gulf crisis, Churkin said: "They will discuss a variety of things."

Almost all of the 1,700 Soviet experts and advisers working under contract would be brought home by Jan. 10, five days before the United Nations deadline for Iraq to pull out of Kuwait, Churkin said.

"This is a final schedule. Our goal is to evacuate the Soviets by Jan. 10," he said, adding that those who wished to remain behind would be permitted to do so.

"The final say is up to the people who remain there despite the dangers that might arise," Churkin said.

Since the Gulf crisis began, 1,634 Soviet nationals had left Iraq, Churkin said.

In addition to the two envoys — Vasily Kolotusha, head of the Foreign Ministry Middle East Department, and Igor Belousov, deputy chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers — Moscow is also sending its deputy oil and gas minister and the deputy minister for economic relations to Iraq.

"The Iraqi side insists that commitments should be precisely defined, stemming from the termination of our contracts," Churkin said, in a reference to Soviet experts whose contracts have not yet expired.

"And it was found reasonable to hold talks at the high level and to formalise further agreements," he said.

Sheikh Jaber visits China

BEIJING (AP) — Kuwait's exiled ruler met Wednesday with Chinese President Yang Shangkun as part of efforts to increase international pressure to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

The official Xinhua news agency said Foreign Minister Qian Qichen also met with the Kuwaiti emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Sabah. The report provided no details of the discussions.

Chinese led the street to greet the emir as he arrived at the state guesthouse in Beijing. Some waved miniature Kuwaiti flags and other held "Free Kuwait" posters.

Sabah planned to brief Chinese officials on a summit of six Gulf states that concluded Tuesday in Qatar with a call for Iraq to end its occupation of Kuwait and reinstate the Al Sabah family as rulers. Xinhua said the emir flew directly to Beijing from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit.

This is the first time a Kuwaiti emir has visited China, Xinhua said.

The emir's diplomatic mission comes a week after a private Kuwaiti delegation visited Beijing to find out what China's position on the Gulf crisis would be after Jan. 15, the deadline set in a U.N. Security Council resolution authorising a military strike to dislodge Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

Members of the delegation said they were satisfied with the talks, but declined to provide specifics.

Kuwait officials have expressed gratitude for China's support in international efforts to end the Gulf crisis, even though the Beijing government abstained on the use-of-force resolution.

China had supported all previous U.N. Security Council resolutions aimed at ending Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. China was the only permanent member of the council that refused to support the measure allowing force, which was approved by a vote of 12-2.

Kuwait's ambassador to China, Abdul Hameed Al Buaijan, said after the vote that his government understood China's position and was pleased that it did not veto the measure.

China has said all efforts to solve the Gulf crisis peacefully must be exhausted. Qian also has said China refused to support the measure allowing military force because of the U.N. role in the Korean war.

Israel releases 3 'underground' terrorists

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel freed three Jewish terrorist leaders Wednesday who served less than seven years each of their life sentences for killing Palestinians in the occupied West Bank.

At Ramle prison near Tel Aviv, dozens of supporters greeted the three freed West Bank settlers as heroes. But critics assailed the release, saying Arabs regularly served longer sentences for lesser crimes.

President Chaim Herzog reduced their jail terms three times — the last time to 10 years — and the prison authority cut them further for good behaviour.

Menachem Livni, Shaul Nir and Uri Shabat were the last three of a 25-member terrorist group released from prison. They were convicted in 1983 of a 1983 machine-gun killing of three Arabs at Hebron's Islamic College. More than 30 people were wounded in the attack.

The release coincides with mounting pressure inside Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing government to crack down on Palestinians waging the three-year-old uprising in the West Bank and occupied Gaza Strip.

Dovish Israelis demonstrated at the low-security prison against the release, which was only symbolic since the three men, observant Jews, had been studying at a Jerusalem seminary for several months as part of court-ordered rehabilitation.

The so-called "Jewish underground" maimed two West Bank Arab mayors in 1980 bombings, planted bombs on 16 Arab buses and plotted to destroy Jerusalem's Al Aqsa mosque, Islam's third holiest shrine.

Under pressure from Israeli hardliners, Shamir's government this month defied international condemnation and ordered four Gaza Strip Arabs expelled.

Settler leaders said the "underground" had sought revenge for the killing of six Israelis in Hebron in 1980. Their campaign made them heroes among Jewish settlers and right-wing politicians said they should be freed.

Herzog, a former member of the opposition Labour Party, defended his May 1989 decision to commute the jail terms to 10 years saying Livni, Nir and Shabat had expressed "unequivocal regret for their actions and renounced the path they took."

But his action, during a surge in Jewish vigilante attacks on Arabs, aroused criticism.

Somali rebels reject government proposal

NAIROBI (RI) — One of Somalia's main rebel groups has dismissed government plans to legalise opposition parties and end 17 years of one-party rule.

The radio of the Somali National Movement (SNM), monitored in Nairobi, said democratic parties would be set up after embattled President Mohammad Siad Barre was overthrown.

"There will be democratic political parties which will be true representatives of the people when the war against the dictator Siad Barre has been won," the radio quoted an SNM spokesman as saying.

The SNM broadcast Tuesday evening was made 24 hours after the government suddenly announced a new law, to take effect immediately, allowing opposition political parties, to contest a general election scheduled for February 1991.

The announcement followed fresh fighting on the edge of the capital Mogadishu Sunday between government troops and rebels believed to belong to a second rebel group, the United Somali Congress (USC).

The USC, which is linked in a loose alliance with the SNM and three other rebel groups, has yet to react, but the SNM described the move on multi-parties as a futile exercise, saying no party independent of Siad Barre could be formed.

"These utterances by the Mogadishu regime are tantamount to a distress call coming from a dying regime and should therefore be ignored," the radio said.

The SNM controls most of the north of the country where heavy fighting since 1988 has pinned down much of Siad Barre's army and forced some 400,000 people to flee into Ethiopia.

Under a new constitution announced in October, Siad Barre — who has ruled since 1969 — stepped down as secretary-general of the ruling Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party.

On paper, the new constitution offers press freedom, guarantees human rights, free expression and social stability.

But the SNM and the other rebel groups have dismissed it as a ploy by Siad Barre to win more time and rejected peace talks while he remains in power.

Tehran hails GCC shift

NICOSIA (RI) — Iran, welcomed overtures from Gulf Arab states, said Wednesday it was ready to discuss a security arrangement with them to keep big powers out of the region.

The closing statement at a summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Tuesday announced it would seek improved relations with Tehran.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, welcomed positive points in the latest communiqué, considers it a step towards expansion of ties with council members," Tehran Radio quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Morteza Sarmadi as saying.

The six-member GCC, formed 10 years ago, was a prime backer of Iraq during its 1980-88 war against Iran.

Iran was ready to "discuss with Persian Gulf littoral states... principles of cooperation to guarantee security of the region away from any influence of foreign powers and in the interests of the Muslim people of the region," Sarmadi said.

He also urged Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait to eliminate the reason for the presence of U.S.-led foreign forces in the region, reported the radio.

A hardline Iranian newspaper said Sunday the GCC was set up as a U.S. plot and should be dismantled.

"The council is in fact the product of an American plan. The objective of the United States was to establish a security belt round the southern borders of the Islamic Republic and thus interfere in the affairs of the region," Jomhuri Eslami said in an editorial carried by the national news agency IRNA.

The paper said a new alliance should be formed with Iran as the dominating force.

The GCC announced during its four-day summit in Doha, its first since Iraq's Aug. 2 seizure of Kuwait, that it had started talks with Iran on future security arrangements.

The main stumbling block is Iran's lack of diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia, host of the multinational force, Gephart said. "I think that it's entirely unacceptable that they are getting a free ride on Desert Shield," he added.

The United States has so far spent about \$6.5 billion to support the U.S. military force. Estimates have put the total cost for the fiscal year that began on October 1 at more than \$30 billion.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq's ambassador to Australia to return

CANBERRA (RI) — Iraq's ambassador to Australia, Aff Issa Al Rawi, is retiring and is due to return to Baghdad next week, the Australian Associated Press (AAP) reported. Embassy staff Wednesday denied Rawi's trip had been ordered by President Saddam Hussein as part of moves to pull out his ambassadors from key Western nations involved in the U.N.-sponsored action against Iraq, AAP said. The staff also denied the Canberra embassy would be reduced in size. But the staff did not know when a replacement ambassador would be sent from Iraq. Rawi has been ambassador since November 1988 and had reached retirement age, the staff said without giving his age. Further comment from the embassy was not available.

Fez court sentences rioters to jail terms

RABAT (RI) — A court in Fez handed out prison sentences ranging from one to seven years Tuesday to a total of 40 people arrested during riots on Dec. 14 and 15, the Moroccan news agency said Wednesday. The riots were sparked off by a 24-hour general strike called by two opposition trade unions, "Union Generale des Travailleurs Marocains (UGTM) and the Confederation Democratique du Travail (CDT). The accused were charged with rebellion, armed and unlawful assembly on a public highway, destruction of buildings, attacks on private property and interfering with the right to work. Twelve others were acquitted.

First Iraqi information minister dies

BAGHDAD (AP) — Mohammad Sidiq Shanshal, the first information minister appointed after Iraq became a republic 32 years ago, has died, newspapers reported Wednesday. He was 80. The newspaper reports said Shanshal died Tuesday. One paper cited the cause of death as "old age and poor health." Shanshal was a key civilian figure who helped the army topple the monarchy in a coup in July 1958. He was then leader of the Istiklal (Independence) party. After the coup, Shanshal was appointed minister of information in the government the army formed under General Abdul Karim Qasim. He later broke up with Qasim and resigned as minister of information over Qasim's Arab policies and his relations with Egypt. Shanshal, like many other pan-Arab politicians in Iraq at the time, favoured a union with Egypt. Shanshal declined to take part in subsequent governments.

Spanish sailors strike

CADIZ, Spain (RI) — The crew of a Spanish merchant ship went on strike Wednesday, demanding that the government use only volunteer crews for the vessel that has been ordered to move French troops to the Gulf. A spokesman for the General Workers' Union (UGT) said the union was not opposed to the ship J.J. Sister going to the Gulf but its crew had to be made up of volunteers.

Congressman wants allies to give more

WASHINGTON (RI) — The Democratic leader of the U.S. House of Representatives criticised Germany, Japan and Saudi Arabia Wednesday for failing to shoulder a fair share of the financial burden in the Gulf crisis. "As it stands now, they're going to only pay about 30 per cent of the costs of Operation Desert Shield," Dick Gephardt of Missouri said in an interview on NBC's Today show. And they haven't even paid in the pledges that come up to 30 per cent. I think frankly we haven't been tough enough or strong enough in asking the allies to do their part," he added. He said Saudi Arabia had "pledged four billion dollars so far; they've got to do a lot better as well." He said the United States should press its allies for more contributions to the multinational forces deployed in and around Saudi Arabia. Asked about Japan's and Germany's financial contributions to the multinational force, Gephardt said: "I think that it's entirely unacceptable that they are getting a free ride on Desert Shield." The United States has so far spent about \$6.5 billion to support the U.S. military force. Estimates have put the total cost for the fiscal year that began on October 1 at more than \$30 billion.

NATO teams to assess Turkish request

ANKARA (RI) — Teams from Belgium and Germany will visit Turkey Thursday to assess its request for NATO aircraft to deter Iraqi attack, a Turkish foreign ministry spokesman said Wednesday. "Two separate teams from Germany and Belgium will come to Ankara tomorrow to gather technical and military information," spokesman Murat Sungur told a news briefing. Turkey, the only NATO member bordering Iraq, asked its NATO allies on Nov. 30 to deploy three squadrons of aircraft attached to a rapid reaction force known as the Allied Mobile Force (AMF). Sungur said the teams of military and technical experts would stay two days in Ankara. "We do not know whether they might want to go eastward Turkey," he added. Turkey has sent military reinforcements to its southeastern border with Iraq since the invasion of Kuwait. A NATO source in Brussels said last week that although the request was unprecedented in the history of the 16-nation alliance, it was likely to be approved.

Thailand plans evacuation for workers

BANGKOK (AP) — Thailand has prepared plans to evacuate tens of thousands of its workers from the Middle East in case of war between Iraq and U.S.-led forces. Foreign Ministry spokesman Sakit Kraierk said Wednesday the plans focused on helping Thai workers in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Jordan. Speaking on the official Radio Thailand, Sakit said Thais have been leaving Iraq and only about 130 remained there. He said there were some 150,000 Thais in Saudi Arabia, and the plan called for their initial evacuation to "safe zones" within that country.

Clampdown in Chad after three killed

N'DJAMENA (RI) — Chad's new government said Wednesday all houses in the capital would be searched for arms and anyone firing in the air would be shot on sight after three people were killed and 50 wounded in Christmas shootings.

The government of President Idris Deby, who took power on Dec. 1 after overthrowing Hissene Habre's eight-year administration, said an arsenal had been looted and armed individuals were threatening the public.

"As early as Wednesday measures will be taken to conduct a full search of each house in N'Djamena in order to take back those weapons," a Deby aide said, reading from the state media.

"I would like to state... without ambiguity that the order has been given to all patrol units to be shot on sight anyone firing into the air," he added.

Sporadic gunfire was heard throughout the night between Monday and Tuesday, causing panic in many areas of N'Djamena.

The MPS is a coalition of several armed factions and its executive committee is acting as Chad's ruling political body. The state council is in day-to-day charge of government affairs.

Deby has promised multi-party democracy and free elections but the first party which tried to register last week was told the move was premature.

Habre and some of his closest lieutenants have found asylum in Senegal but the number two figure in his administration, Guera Lassou, returned to N'Djamena Wednesday.

Lassou, who was under police protection, was agriculture minister and executive secretary of Habre's Union Party.

The MPS soldiers who entered N'Djamena this month struck diplomats and other observers as disciplined.

But residents spoke Wednesday of a new climate of insecurity due to the large numbers of firearms in circulation.

After 20 years of civil war Chad has become home to a plethora of armed factions. Depending on which warlord is in power, some militias cohabit peacefully inside the official army while others take exile in neighbouring Sudan or Libya.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

18:30 Koran

18:40 Programme review

18:45 Children programme

17:10 Book of Adventure

18:00 News summary

18:10 Local programme

19:30 Programme review

20:30 News in Arabic

20:30 Local news

21:30 Programme review

21:40 Local programme

22:30 Arabic film

23:00 News in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Cartoons

18:35 Documentary

19:00 News in French

19:15 Reportage d'Actualites

19:30 News in Hebrew

19:45 Varieties

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 Bill Cosby Show

21:10 Black Forest

22:00 News in English

22:30 Feature film

PRAYER TIMES

05:07 Fajr

06:29 (Sunrise) Duha

11:37 Dhuhar

14:21 'Asr

16:44 Maghreb

18:06 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish Tel: 610740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 601757

Terranova Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625441

Anglican Church Tel. 625363, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713131

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Assiout International Church Tel. 627981, 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Slight rise in temperature will take place and winds will be northeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./max. temp.

Amman 1 / 12

Aqaba 9 / 20

Deserts 0 / 14

Jordan Valley 8 / 21

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Aqaba 18. Humidity readings: Amman 75 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Amin Abdul Jaber 614222

Dr. Nabil Al Mubtasek 825252

Dr. Issam Barakki 679466

Dr. Abdul Majid Al Sha'er 791402

Firas pharmacy 641912

Ferdows pharmacy 723339

Al Asma pharmacy 657055

Nairookh pharmacy 625672

Al Salami pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 640445

Shunsiat pharmacy 676460

RUJID:

Dr. Ali Al Omari (—)

Al Sharaa pharmacy (985)2381

ZARQA:

Dr. Izzeddin Abdul Salew (—)

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 81381372

Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 6443816

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 6424412

Jabal Amman Maternity 642562

RUJID:

Dr. Amin Abdul Jaber 614222

Dr. Nabil Al Mubtasek 825252

Dr. Issam Barakki 679466

Dr. Abdul Majid Al Sha'er 791402

Firas pharmacy 641912

Ferdows pharmacy 723339

Al Asma pharmacy 657055

Nairookh pharmacy 625672

Al Salami pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 640445

Shunsiat pharmacy 676460

RUJID:

Dr. Ali Al Omari (—)

Al Sharaa pharmacy (985)2381

ZARQA:

Dr. Izzeddin Abdul Salew (—)

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

18:15 Riyadh (RJ)

18:30 New Delhi (RJ)

18:30 Cairo (RJ)

18:45 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

18:55 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

17:25 Larnaca (RJ)

17:30 London (RJ)

18:30 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

19:30 Athens, Beirut (RJ)

19:30 Casablanca (RJ)

20:10 Rome (RJ)

20:45 Rome (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

18:30 Sanaa (LH)

18:40 Riyadh (SV)

18:40 Bahrain, Muscat (GF)

17:20 Ankara, Istanbul (TK)

17:30 Dubai (EK)

18:45 Muscat, Bahrain (GF)

18:50 Amsterdam, Istanbul (KL)

19:15 Frankfurt (LH)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

11:45 Rome (RJ)

13:00 London (RJ)

13:15 Paris (RJ)

14:00 Larnaca (RJ)

17:15 Agaba (RJ)

20:45 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

18:30 Sanaa (LH)

18:40 Riyadh (SV)

18:40 Bahrain, Muscat (GF)

17:20 Ankara, Istanbul (TK)

17:30 Dubai (EK)

18:45 Muscat, Bahrain (GF)

18:50 Amsterdam, Istanbul (KL)

19:15 Frankfurt (LH)

MARKET PRICES

Upstower price in fils per kg.

Apple 600 / 500

Banana 500 / 450

Banana (Mukammal) 450 / 400

Beans 400 / 350

Cabbage 100 / 50

Carrot 180 / 140

Cailliflower 150 / 100

Corn 150 / 100

Cucumbers (large) 150 / 100

Cucumbers (small) 300 / 300

Dates 500 / 400

Eggplant 170 / 130

Garlic 1400 / 1000

Lemon 200 / 150

Mallow 180 / 120

Marrow (large) 120 / 60

Marrow (small) 240 / 200

Onion (dry) 250 / 200

Onion (green) 180 / 140

Okra 600 / 500

Orange 420 / 250

Pepper (hot) 200 / 150

Pepper (sweet) 130 / 90

Potato 300 / 250

Radish 150 / 100

PRAYER TIMES

05:07 Fajr

06:29 (Sunrise) Duha

11:37 Dhuhar

14:21 'Asr

16:44 Maghreb

18:06 Isha

Jordan, IDB discuss cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Planning Minister Khalid Amin Abdullah Tuesday received a delegation from the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank (IDB), led by Bakri Makki Hamad, chief engineer of the bank's Operations and Projects Department.

Abdullah discussed with the team scopes of cooperation between Jordan and IDB and the bank's contribution to a number of projects in Jordan.

After the meeting Abdullah said the head of the delegation had informed him of the bank's agreement to finance the purchase of a ferry at a total cost of \$13 million, payable over a period of ten years with a two-year grace period.

He pointed out that the delegation had completed a study for expanding the Arab Potash Company, to increase its production capacity from 1,400,000 tonnes to 1,800,000 tonnes.

The study will be presented to the bank officials for defining the bank's contribution to this \$15 million project.

He also said that the bank is currently embarking on a study for the Amal Cancer Centre at the University of Jordan, with a view to allocating some contributions towards the costs of providing medical equipment.

House committee to start investigations in corruption cases

By Tareq Momani
Al Rai

AMMAN — A Lower House special committee in charge of investigating corruption cases will soon start investigations in four corruption cases referred to it by the prosecutor general.

The cases deal with ministry of supply's imports, Azraq-Jafr road, Abu Naser Housing Estate and construction of Swaqa prison.

At a meeting held recently, the committee said it was its prerogative to investigate cases involving former and present ministers.

The committee said it would follow up and look into all cases of corruption which have not reached the House, would refer them to the concerned authorities and prepare a report on each case to be submitted to the House for taking a decision.

The seven-member committee has worked out a mechanism for work; under this mechanism, the meeting will be legal if a quorum of four people, including the chairman or the rapporteur, is present.

The committee's chairman will be vested with the authorities of the prosecutor general. In case of the chairman's absence, he can delegate his authorities to the rapporteur, who will stand in for him.

The committee will follow the rules applied in criminal court hearings, and shall have the right to seek the assistance of experts either from the government system or from outside it.

The committee shall have the same powers of the prosecutor general in such cases.

The committee comprises Salim Al Zubi, who was elected as its chairman, Mohammad Abu Fares, Abdullah Al Nusur, Hussein Mujalli, Ahmad Al Azaideh, Laith Shbeilat and Abdullah Alkaleh.

King concedes Al Hussein family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday delegated Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Bin Zaid to condole Al Hussein family over the death of Ishaq Musa Al Hussein.

Saddam meets Jordanian delegation, pledges support for the intifada

AMMAN (Petra) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein received Tuesday a delegation representing the Jordan Arab National Democratic Alliance (JANDA) which is currently visiting Iraq.

The Iraqi president affirmed to the delegation that the Palestinian issue was the focal point in the Arab struggle and that Iraq's Aug. 12 initiative was the proper way to resolve all the problems of the region peacefully.

President Hussein stressed "the failure of the (Arab) oil states to extend support to Jordan to help it overcome its economic difficulties despite the fact that it stands on the longest demarcation line with the Israeli enemy."

The Palestinian uprising, he said, "constitutes the spearhead

in confronting the Zionist arrogance." He added that "Iraq would support the uprising until the Palestinian people's aspirations are achieved."

He said "conspiracies against Iraq are woven because of its national stands and commitment to solve the Palestinian problem." "Had Iraq taken care only of its internal affairs and interests no one would have woven plots against it," he said.

The president lauded Jordan's stands on the various Arab issues and described its stand on the Gulf crisis as distinguished.

He also reiterated Iraq's firm position that Kuwait is "geographically and historically part of Iraq and will remain so."

Some of JANDA's delegation members emphasised at the meeting the fact that the Arab masses, particularly in Jordan

and Palestine, had expressed readiness to present sacrifices to defend Iraq.

They called on Iraq to work hard to make Jan. 15 a day of failure for the U.S.

The one-and-a-half-hour meeting was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan, Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister Saadoun Hamadi and Minister of Culture and Information Latif Nusayyef Jassem.

Members of the delegation were previously received by Ramadan and Jassem who affirmed that Iraq would not make compromises over its national rights and national Arab responsibilities. They also lauded Jordan's stand on the Gulf crisis.

JUST, Arab Medical University to boost cooperation

RAMTHA (Petra) — President of the Benghazi-based Arab Medical University Amer Rabih Wednesday visited Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) where he was briefed by its president, Kamel Ajlouni, on the university's objectives and aspirations.

Ajlouni spoke about the university's role in enhancing scientific and cultural development, enriching scientific research and pointed out its role in developing the local community.

Rabih briefed Ajlouni on the Arab Medical University's programmes, and stressed the need for exchanging visits by staff from both universities.

The two presidents discussed means of strengthening cooperation between the two universities, particularly in the medical and technological fields.

Rabih later met with Dean of the Faculty of Medicine Saad Hijazi and reviewed with him the programmes of the faculty and the degrees it grants to students. He also briefed him on the faculty's role in enriching scientific research.

House (Continued from page 1)

us to be exposed to foreign countries." He asked: "Why should we only be exposed to the American model? This model of the 'superman' has become a model for many of our young. Why shouldn't we think of other creative works from other countries in the east and the west?"

Kawar who read his statement on behalf of deputies Faris Nabulsi, Issa Mdanat, Salim Zoubi and Hosni Shiyyab, took the case of the Arabic daily Sawt Al Shaah to support his argument against the government's information policy. He said the government-owned newspaper has over seven years lost JD 2.4 million, changed management eight times, and editors six times and changed staff with every new prime minister.

He said that the information policy had always sought to reflect the policy of the government in power. He, however, said that the last year had seen a lot of change and improvement.

"The new policies have opened tiny windows for other points of view," he said.

Brotherhood's Khalafat, who has been very vocal in his speeches in regard to JTV and Jordan Radio, accused the government of having no objectives for its information policy.

"The information leadership is incapable of addressing (our problems) in the haze of objectives set for this policy," he said.

Deputies Taher Masri (Independent, Amman) and Salameh Ghweiri (National Bloc, Zarqa) defended the government's policy.

Masri, however, veered away from the information issue and also defended the government's foreign policy, which, in previous session, also came under attack.

Masri preached the House on

U.S. orders non-essential personnel out of Jordan, Sudan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The U.S. State Department has ordered all U.S. government dependents and non-essential personnel to leave Jordan and Sudan "well before" Jan. 15, the deadline set by the U.N. Security Council for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait or face war.

The department also advised U.S. citizens to defer all travel to Jordan and Sudan and said those already there should leave as soon as possible, according to a travel advisory released by American Centre in Amman.

The State Department had previously ordered the departure of non-essential personnel and government dependents from Yemen, and authorised their departure from Jordan and Mauritania. It had also authorised the voluntary departure of U.S. government dependents in Bahrain, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

The latest travel advisory said that after further review the State Department was now ordering the departures from Sudan and Jordan, "to be completed well before Jan. 15."

Following is part of the text of the advisory:

As a result of unstable condi-

tions in the region caused by Iraq's failure to comply with United Nations resolutions, the Department of State has recently ordered the departure of dependents and non-essential personnel from the U.S. embassies in Sudan and Yemen, authorised the voluntary departure of United States government dependents and non-essential employees from Jordan and Mauritania, and authorised voluntary departure for United States government dependents in Bahrain, the UAE, Qatar, and the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

After further review of the situation, the Department of State has now ordered the departure of all non-essential personnel and dependents of United States government personnel from Jordan, to be completed well before January 15th.

American citizens should defer all travel to Jordan and those already in Jordan who do not have essential reasons for staying should plan to depart the country as soon as possible and well before Jan. 15. Americans should also be aware that scheduling their departure out of the region may take some time because of the limited availability of airline seats.

No dates (Continued from page 1)

no right to do this, God will never be on its side or support it. For an army to have faith, it must be right about the cause for which it is fighting."

In a speech Tuesday night in Baghdad, Saddam remained unyielding in his demand that the Palestinian question take priority in any talks to settle the Gulf crisis.

"Palestine comes first," he told a Jordanian delegation.

"This is a test of international legitimacy... he who claims it, must clearly put in his programme and policy that Palestine first be liberated," he said.

Iraq could attack allied forces in the Gulf before the Jan. 15 deadline, Britain's Gulf commander said Wednesday.

Lieutenant General Sir Peter de la Billiere, commander of British forces in the Middle East, said Iraq could be expected to take the initiative before the deadline.

"It's going to be a very brittle few weeks ahead of us as we see how the political situation develops and how Saddam Hussein is going to make up his mind about what he is going to do," de la Billiere said on British Broadcasting Corporation television.

"He will do something to take the initiative and if he decides he is going down the military road he will try to take a military initiative and that initiative could well come before Jan. 15."

De la Billiere added: "So there is nothing sacrosanct about Jan. 15 in military terms."

In Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, a senior U.S. intelligence officer said Iraqi troops had dug in heavily in Kuwait in recent weeks in a sign they have no intention of leaving soon.

Lieutenant Colonel Tom Coury, speaking at the first of what are scheduled to be weekly press briefings, told reporters Iraq had recently stepped up training for fighter pilots.

"We presently assess that (Iraq) intends to remain in Kuwait for the long haul," Coury said.

"Considering (its) embargoed economy, the massive expense of constructing these defences and moving in additional men, and material should give us an excellent indicator of (Iraq's) intentions to remain in Kuwait for the long term."

Cabinet endorses revised laws

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Tuesday endorsed the revised Awqaf and the revised private post office boxes regulations.

Under the new amendment to the Awqaf law provisions governing the collection of funds to build mosques will be relaxed, because building mosques depends directly on collection of contributions from citizens. The regulation gives the mosques' committees broader authorities to disburse the contributions collected in accordance with specific controls and principles, ensuring that such contributions are spent effectively.

The revised private post office boxes regulation provided for collecting a yearly subscription fee of JD 2 for subscribers in universities and community colleges. The annual subscription fee for post office boxes is JD 5.

The cabinet also approved the special agreement on the JD 75 million corrective loan, which will be provided by the Japanese Bank of Exports and Imports. The loan will be paid over a period of twelve years with a four-year grace period, starting 1991.

Petra Bank auditors report banking violations

AMMAN (J.T.) — A reassessment of the dissolved Petra Bank has shown a deficit of JD 252 million as on Aug. 2, 1989, according to the Auditors' and Board of Directors' report which has published in Al Rai Arabic daily Wednesday.

The report said that the bank's assets on Aug. 2, 1989 totalled JD 476 million, while it was found out after verification that the total bank assets did not exceed JD 297 million, including an amount of JD 94 million which was difficult to trace.

"The bank's liabilities would have been just above JD 476 million had it been closed or liquidated on Aug. 2," the report said.

The amount included JD 74 million in deposits and debts for the Central Bank, JD 56 million as deposits and debts for Jordanian commercial banks and financial institutions and JD 274 million as deposits in Jordanian and foreign currency for Jordanian clients, including guarantees on credits, and JD 51 million as direct obligations to foreign banks.

The report added that there was clear evidence that the bank had been involved in banking transactions contravening banking practices. These transactions in particular require a lengthy time to investigate, the report said.

It added that the bank was involved in a number of transac-

Jordan regrets Soviet's upgrading ties with Israel

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan views the upgrading of relations between the Soviet Union and Israel as a regrettable development constituting the latest link in a shifting Soviet approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict, senior Jordanian officials said Wednesday.

"The move does not come as a surprise," said one of the officials. "But it is regrettable that Moscow chose to do so at a time when there is little breakthrough in efforts to resolve the Palestinian problem," added the official.

The head of the Soviet mission in Tel Aviv Alexei F. Chistyakov, formally presented his credentials as Soviet consul general to Israel Foreign Minister David Levy Tuesday.

Chistyakov's counterpart in Moscow, Artyeh Levin, was expected to go through a similar ceremony at the Kremlin but the sudden resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze last week delayed him.

"We were expecting a much worse development" between Moscow and Tel Aviv than the upgrading of ties, the Jordanian official said referring to prospects for full resumption of

Soviet-Israeli diplomatic relations severed in 1967.

In any event, the official said, Jordan is more alarmed by the dramatic increase in the flow of Soviet Jewish immigrants to Israel and the "Soviet behaviour at the Security Council."

The official was referring to Moscow's support for the American approach to the Gulf crisis and the backing it gave to Security Council resolutions against Iraq.

The Soviet approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict also marked a major turn earlier this month when Moscow was instrumental in repeatedly delaying for several weeks and watering down a Security Council resolution on protection of Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

The resolution, adopted last week, relegated a call for an international conference on the Middle East into a separate non-binding statement by the council's president.

Moscow had been arguing that any resumption of relations with Israel would depend on the Jewish state agreeing to attend a Middle East peace conference. The upgrading of relations to consular level came during a meeting between Shevardnadze and Levy in New York in September. Israel continues to

reject a Middle East peace conference.

Meanwhile, the rising flood of Soviet Jewish emigres to Israel is causing deep concern among Jordanian officials.

Against a backdrop of what Israeli officials and Zionist leaders describe as rising fears of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union and worry that the liberal emigration policy of President Mikhail Gorbachev would be reversed with the resignation of Shevardnadze, the number of Soviet Jews arriving in Israel has gone up to an average of 3,000 a day since last week.

Over 172,000 Soviet Jews arrived in Israel this year.

"This does not bode well at all for the Palestinian problem," said another official. "We have been raising concern at various international levels that there is little doubt that most of the arrivals will either be settled in the occupied territories or take the place of others who move in (from within the green line)."

"In effect, whether the Soviet Jews are settled in the occupied territories or not, the fact remains that chances for a peaceful solution, based on territorial compromise recede further with the arrival of every new immigrant in Israel," added the official.

several companies and institutions financed by the bank, and run with the participation of its former director general and his relatives.

The bank has contributed significantly to financing 18 local companies, most of which were in difficult financial situations which could lead to bankruptcy. The bank also dealt with institutions owned or run by Chababi family, such as MEBCO in Beirut, SOCCO in Geneva, SCP in Cyprus, SCF in Geneva and Petra Bank in Washington.

These institutions' obligations to the bank are worth JD 96 million, however, they refuse to cooperate with the current bank management in providing information and confirming outstanding dealings, the report said.

The report pointed out that the bank was a party to more than 700 serious cases, including a case filed by the First Chicago Bank, which accused Petra Bank of plotting to get \$23 million in an illegal manner.

The report mentioned the bank's involvement in financing a project for raising shrimps in Malaysia, saying that the total amount involved in this project was \$5 million, in addition to \$200,000 which had been directly paid by Petra Bank in Amman to the director of the project, which was a total failure.

The figures available at the bank show that the total earn-

ings of the bank's director, including all allowances, totalled JD 180,000, and that he got a loan of JD 800,000 to build his own house, at an interest rate of four per cent, despite the fact that the Central Bank had only approved a JD 200,000 loan, provided that he mortgaged his house to the bank.

Another evidence of corruption was the annual sum of JD 57,000 paid by the bank for a rented house in Georgetown in Washington where Chababi family members used to go during their visits to Washington.

The bank manager had also wasted \$8-10 million, which the bank had netted as a result of selling VISA cards, in addition to some of the \$6 million which had been accumulated by the bank as a result of its dealings with VISA cards and its mediation with other banks in Jordan, Middle East and Eastern Europe.

The report concluded that the bank had encouraged the flow of large amounts of dollars from Jordanian citizens to banks abroad through the facilities it offered to the Jordanian citizens to transfer foreign currency, contrary to the regulation governing the transfer of foreign currency in force in Jordan.

This process had reached its peak in June and July 1989, when the total amounts of foreign currency transfers had exceeded \$100 million.

Jordanian, Syrian committee discuss budget

AMMAN (Petra) — Syrian Industry Minister Antoine Jubran Thursday arrives here at the head of a Syrian delegation to take part in the meetings of the general assembly of the Jordanian-Syrian Industrial Committee.


The meetings, which will be chaired by Industry and Trade Minister Ziad Fariz, will discuss the assembly's 1989 annual report, its general budget and final account, and will endorse a number of draft regulation regarding the carpet factory located in Sweida.

The company was established in 1976 with a capital of JD 20 million, shared equally by Jordan and Syria. The company has undertaken a number of studies on joint projects, some of which are already functioning, such as the portland cement factory in Jordan, which has a production capacity of 100,000 tonnes a year.

A public shareholding company for producing white cement was established and production started in 1985. The company's JD 10 million capital is shared equally by Jordan and Syria.

The carpet factory was established in Sweida, in Syria, with a capital of approximately JD 9 million. It started production in 1986.

A third project, for producing insecticides, will be established in Syria with a capital of \$22 million. The project, which will start production in 1991, will have an initial production capacity of 4,000 tonnes.



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WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition entitled "L'orient des cafes" at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Mukarram Haghdooga at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Hassan Jalal at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975

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Gorbachev's challenge

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev has succeeded in obtaining extra powers to rule his colossal but disintegrating country. The great powers granted him by the Soviet Congress recently make him in effect enjoy more strength than most of his predecessors at the Soviet helm even in the heyday of Communist rule in Moscow. This has already made him a suspect of bringing dictatorship back to the Soviet system of government in connivance with the conservative elements who became increasingly concerned about the turn of events in their country.

Probably Gorbachev has sought new powers and jurisdictions against his instinct and better judgement. After all he introduced his glasnost policies some five years ago specifically to reverse the tide of dictatorship in the USSR. Yet he and the conservative forces in the country have become increasingly disturbed by persistent reports that foreign powers are interfering with the internal situation of the Soviet Union and are behind the disarray in it. When the head of the KGB accuses alien elements point blank of meddling in the domestic affairs of the country and fanning the nationalist fervour, the Soviet President is left with no choice but to crack down on all conspiracies against his country even if that entails the suspension of the process of democratisation that he heralded with so much fanfare only a short time ago.

No leader worth his salt would wish to see his country disintegrate before his very eyes and stay quiet. This is exactly what Gorbachev is trying to do now. There is nevertheless a big risk that violence would ensue following the impending clash between the conservative forces and those dubbed as democratic or nationalist in the wake of the granting of emergency powers to the Soviet leader. Nationalist sentiments have already risen in the fifteen republics making up the Soviet Union. Violence and civil disturbances in these republics are expected to occur regardless of what Moscow would prefer to do. On balance, therefore, Gorbachev is doing the right thing by putting the existence and survival of his country before any other consideration. He himself is taking a very bitter medicine and is prescribing the same to his fellow countrymen but he is left with no alternative. One can only wait and see what kind of success he will have in maintaining the integrity and unity of his country.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Wednesday voiced its dismay at Turkey's present hostile attitude towards the Arab nation. The Turkish government has taken one decision after another towards escalating tension, and has decided on several steps that are to be regarded as unjustifiably provocative than can lead only to confrontation and aggression by Turkey on the Arab nation, said the paper. The paper was critical particularly of Turkey's latest decision to deploy rockets near the Iraqi-Turkish border, and Ankara's call on NATO to send in warplanes and ground forces to be deployed vis-a-vis Iraq, and its closure of the only land route with Iraq. It said that it seems Turkey wants to project Iraq as a country which is threatening Turkish territory and endangering its security in a bid to win NATO's assistance. What is clear to everybody in the Arab World is that Washington is now intent on involving Turkey directly in confrontation with Iraq and to sow further seeds of mistrust and hostility between the Turks and the Arabs which can lead to war and serve U.S. and Israeli interests, the paper noted. The Turkish government should realise that by taking an aggressive attitude towards the Arabs, it can gain nothing; and Washington would never reward Turkey for betraying its Arab neighbours nor will it ever help it seize more Arab land, the paper said. The only feasible attitude which Ankara should resort to at the moment, said the paper, is to maintain good relations with its neighbouring Muslim countries to safeguard Turkish-Arab relations for generations to come. Ankara, the paper added, should never allow the United States to involve the Turkish people in a war from which no benefits can ever come to them, nor can ever promote good neighbourly relations.

Al Dustour daily said that Israel is now escalating its repression against the Arabs at a time when it is issuing threats against Iraq. Israel wants a war in the region that would serve its own interests and those of its allies and can by all means destroy Iraq's military power that is threatening the Jewish state. Through a major conflagration in the region Israel hopes not only to consolidate its hold over Palestine but also to remove a formidable foe from the scene, and pave the way for Israel's ambitious plans which entail occupying further lands to settle more Jewish immigrants, said the paper. Israel, the British and the Americans seem to be the only voices which are advocating war on the Arabs to achieve their own interests, while the world community, especially European nations, is desperately searching for a peaceful formula that would end the crisis without bloodshed, the paper noted. It said that there is still time for peaceful efforts to achieve a settlement and there are people of goodwill who are intent on attaining peace; and their efforts should not be hampered by the warmongers' cries for battle. But it warned that should Israel succeed in involving the world community in a war in the Gulf which Zionists believe would be a way to relieve Israel from its burdens, the Jewish state would find itself facing the consequences, and would suffer as much as the other if not more.

Economic Forum

Jordan's rigid budget structure

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

THE 1991 budget was drafted under assumptions emanating from the circumstances of extreme uncertainties relating to the Gulf crisis. It thus can invoke all sorts of contradicting opinions depending on where one stands.

The budget envisages massive external borrowing of JD 326 million which is a historically record high. The point that an observer would want to know is whether this marks a departure from our policy of minimising dependence on foreign loans (if that policy ever existed, to start with) or if it is merely a reflection of a temporary need which arose from the Gulf crisis. Irrespective of how soft fresh external loans are, or otherwise, this trend underlines a disturbing notion because it means that we finance the totality of our public investments from externally borrowed funds. Even totally interest-free external loans do not change this agonising fact.

Actually, the draft budget envisages JD 36.7 million deficit on the current budget which must be financed from borrowing. Because internal borrowing is set at JD 26.6 million, at least JD 10.1 million of external loans are to finance current spending. This is alarming, especially as we note that the service of the treasury's external debt in 1991 in terms of amortisation and interest payments amount to JD 250 million, that is around 71 per cent of fresh external borrowing. This means that we are about to be caught in the debt trap, whereby new borrowing does not suffice to meet external debt servicing.

Other main characteristic features of the budget are, in our

judgment, the overestimation of domestic revenues and the underestimation of current expenditures. Domestic revenues are expected to shrink at 5.8 per cent which seems a modest drop given an economy whose gross domestic product has started to contract at around 8 per cent. At JD 90 million, income tax revenues are more likely to be inflated by some JD 20 million as a consequence of being subjected to the combined impact of a slowing economy and the imminent switching to the Provisional Income Tax Law No. 4 instead of the present High-Rate Law No. 40. Customs duties are also overestimated to the tune of JD 30 million as their figure of JD 201.5 million does not seem to reflect properly the expected decline in imports, especially the high luxury items which take time to recover after the national income recedes.

Current expenditures are allowed to grow at a very meagre rate of 5.2 per cent. Historically, such a low rate has never been observed and it is less than the current rate of inflation. Meaning that these expenditures will fall in real terms. Our impression is that they will not, because they have already been shaved to the bone and are not therefore compressible to any significant degree. And it will not be fair to blame the government if they overshoot their target.

The Finance Committee of the House of Representatives accepted all the assumptions of the budget speech and the figures of the budget itself including the macroeconomic impact of the

Gulf crisis, with the exception of the domestic revenues estimates which the committee thought were ambitious. The committee overlooked the record level of the deficit which stood at JD 352 million after it had trimmed expenditures by around JD 10 million and thus cut the deficit by that much. Simultaneously, the committee accepted the record levels of external borrowing. It gently touched the notorious issue of unemployment and seemed to be happy with the inflation record!

However, the most important lesson of the 1991 budget, as well as of those of the past few years, is that the structure of the Jordanian budget has become measurably rigid. This means that, realistically, current expenditures cannot and should not be curbed any more, with the result that any squeeze here will be at the expense of capital spending, which is hazardous. On the other hand, it means that domestic revenues cannot be boosted without undermining production incentives (in the case of levying more direct taxes) and/or dangerously stimulating inflation (in the case of imposing more indirect taxes).

It thus seems that the only way out from this fiscal impasse is to boost foreign grants. This will give the Jordanian government the breathing space to get its fiscal adjustment policies underway and will spare Jordan the bitter choice between cutting deeply its capital spending and thus jeopardising its growth prospects on the one hand and running large deficits and an identically higher external debt on the other.

Egypt reaped the benefits

By William C. Mann
The Associated Press

CAIRO — Egypt's traditional role as big brother to the Arabs has never been tested more than during its confrontation with the other major Arab power, Iraq. Analysts say President Hosni Mubarak passed the test well.

No matter how the Gulf crisis ends, they say, Egypt's role has been enhanced with Saudi Arabia and smaller Gulf states.

Its importance, stemming mainly from its military strength and the political weight it carries with the West, will probably be increased for a long time to come.

A likely scenario would be the oil-rich sheikdoms, especially Saudi Arabia, financing a standing Egyptian army as the backbone of regional security in the Gulf.

"This is not viewed as an Egyptian rent-a-cop, nor is it viewed as a Saudi bailout," said Jim Zogby of the Washington-based Arab-American Institute. He said political and economic cooperation would be an integral part of the relationship.

Egypt already has close to 30,000 soldiers in Saudi Arabia and in the United Arab Emirates, part of a 500,000-strong U.S.-dominated multinational force facing Iraq.

Mubarak and U.S. President George Bush's administration placed together the Arab force, also involving Syrian and Moroccan troops, after Iraq invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2.

Zogby and others said the

basis of Egypt's new military prominence is a general unease with the presence of 250,000 U.S. soldiers on Arab soil to protect Arabs from Arabs. Richard Murphy, former assistant secretary of state for the Near East and South Asia, sees among the Arabs "a sense of shame that Arabs fouled the West, but they want to take care of it themselves."

'If Iraq is driven out of Kuwait, U.S. soldiers will be needed in the region for some time afterward while Gulf Arabs and Egypt organise a regional defence force, officials in Egypt's foreign ministry believe.'

The notion of American forces remaining in the area after the crisis ends "in itself is uncomfortable for everybody," said Murphy by telephone from New York, where he is an analyst for the Council on Foreign Relations.

And even if they did stay, he

said, "a United Nations flag would be more comfortable. But the Saudis want an Arab force."

That means to a great extent an Egyptian force. The Egyptian army, which has 500,000 men and more than 600,000 reserves, is the only Arab force capable of standing up to Iraq's million-man military.

If Iraq is driven out of Kuwait, U.S. soldiers will be needed in the region for some time afterward while Gulf Arabs and Egypt organise a regional defence force, officials in Egypt's foreign ministry believe.

The officials say the Arab force must be formed exclusively by Arabs.

"Any Arab security system must emanate from within the Arab nation," Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid told an economics and political seminar at Cairo University. "It should not be imposed from outside. If it is, it will definitely fail."

Abdel Meguid's chief aide, Minister of State Butros Ghali, said Egypt's role would extend beyond shoring up weaker nations with its military might.

"One of the first objectives of Egyptian diplomacy once the Gulf crisis is over will be to create a new momentum in favour of economic integration of the Arab World," Ghali told an interviewer in New York.

With that, he said, can come political cohesion that would let the Arabs compete with a united Europe.

... but Egyptians don't want to go to war

By Sara El Gammal
Reuters

CAIRO — Will war really break out in the Gulf? Will Egyptians really fight Iraqis to free Kuwait?

Those two questions are preoccupying citizens of this mainly-Muslim Arab country that has thrown its weight behind Washington in the Gulf crisis.

Four months since Iraq invaded Kuwait, support still runs high for Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's unwavering stance on the crisis.

But they are deeply divided over military action against Baghdad and how far Egypt should involve itself in any shooting war.

Some are concerned about the economic and psychological impact of another war. Since 1948, Egyptians have fought four wars against Israel and the human toll is still a fresh memory for many families.

An informal survey of Gulf crisis attitudes among almost 100 people, from night watchmen to farmers' wives, found fervent hope for a peaceful solution.

But if war comes, a majority of about two-to-one felt that Egyptian soldiers deployed in the Gulf should only defend Saudi Arabia and Islam's holy sites there.

They believe they should not

kill their fellow Arabs. Western and U.S. troops should do the fighting for Kuwait's freedom, they say.

But the vast majority said they will stand behind Mubarak, whatever his decision might be.

"It's the best thing Mubarak has done since he became president," said Tarek Abdel-Alim, 27, a coffee shop worker. "He took a man's stand and did not waver when under pressure."

"I changed my mind about Mubarak since this Gulf business," said Mustapha Khalil, 35, a street merchant. "For once, he stood firm, he opened his mouth and did something. I now respect him."

After Iraqi tanks rolled into Kuwait in August, Mubarak condemned the invasion and hosted an Arab summit which called for Iraq's unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and the return of its legitimate rulers.

Egypt, which supported Iraq during the 1980-88 Gulf war against Iran, is one of the main Arab contributors to the multinational force now opposing Iraq.

Since the crisis, it has been one of the United States' staunchest Arab allies. In return, the United States has written off Egypt's \$7 billion military debt.

A handful of Egyptians interviewed by Reuters were totally against Mubarak's poli-

cy, saying he jeopardised the lives of tens of thousands of Egyptian families in Iraq and Kuwait which he condemned the invasion.

"I'm against the invasion and believe the Kuwaiti people must return to their homes," said Hamida Abdullah, 50, who lost a son in the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and a brother in the 1960s Yemen civil war.

"But we are sick and tired of fighting other people's battles," she added. "We lose our children and get nothing but abuse in return once the crisis is over."

"If there has to be war, let Americans and the foreign troops in the Gulf do the fighting for a change."

"There are Egyptians who are in the Iraqi army," said Ragab Khalil, a government employee. "Will we allow our soldiers to destroy them?"

"Business has been slower than normal because of the Gulf crisis," said Mohammed Assem, a bric-a-brac shop owner. "If there is a war, I don't know how we will live. Our young will be killed, but I'm sure they'll do what they have to do."

"I stand firm in my support for Egypt's policy in the Gulf — war or no war. It hasn't changed over the past four months," said Mohammed Sabri, 55, a lawyer.

"But may God keep away the evils of fighting."

Bush's fate in the grip of the Gulf and economy

By Laurence McQuillan
Reuters

WASHINGTON — President George Bush heads into the second half of his term blessed by the ending of the cold war but facing crises in the Gulf and the domestic economy.

War and diplomacy, unemployment and debt look set to seal his political future.

White House officials hail Bush's record on the domestic and international fronts. Chief of Staff John Sununu said: "It's been very effective. Some tough problems that had not been dealt with over a long period of time got dealt with. So I think it was a good first half."

Others give the president a more mixed review.

"You've got to give him high marks for what he did in inter-

national terms, but he gets much lower marks for how he's handled the domestic component," says Norman Ornstein, a presidential scholar with the American Enterprise Institute.

Max Sherman, dean at the University of Texas Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, describes Bush's experience as "fairly typical of the first two years of a new term."

"You have fairly smooth sailing at first. Then as these problems start rearing heads you start losing popularity. He probably did better than most."

At this halfway stage it seems almost certain that Bush will seek a second term in 1992. Most experts and government officials agree he is about to undergo his biggest test: The still-unfolding Gulf

crisis. With an enormous multinational force poised in the Gulf region, 460,000 of them Americans, Bush awaits the Jan. 15 United Nations deadline for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait.

Jody Powell, who was a senior adviser to President Jimmy Carter, said he was generally positive about Bush's policies but criticised his decision to increase U.S. forces in the region by over 150,000 without public explanation.

"Clearly the intent was to put the fear of the Lord into the Iraqis, but he ended up putting the fear of the Lord into the American public," said Powell. "The Iraqis didn't find it credible, but the American public did."

Soon after Bush took his oath of office in January 1989 he started to inherit profound benefits from the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe — the goal of U.S. foreign policy for decades.

Not only did America's primary enemy, the Soviet Union, become a key ally almost overnight, but Bush found himself the symbol of the winning side, enjoying the cheers of thousands on visits to Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

At home few found fault with him in his first 18 months — until last June, when he abandoned his pledge of "Read my lips: No new taxes." The vow had been centrepiece of his presidential campaign, and the pride of conservative Republicans.

Bush's turnaround came when the budget deficit could no longer be ignored. The American government was spending far more than it earned.

A bitter battle between Democrats and Republicans lasted through late summer and into the autumn until a budget agreement was reached. It trimmed the deficit by limiting income tax deductions and raising taxes on alcohol, petrol, cigarettes and luxuries.

Through it all, Bush watched his poll ratings plummet as old questions about his leadership abilities were revived.

The deficit is not his only economic worry.

"The other thing that looms over us is the recession," said presidential student Ornstein. "George Bush isn't going to be

remembered for... presiding over the executive branch while the clean air act went into effect. He's going to be remembered for the severity of the economic downturn and how long it lasts..."

Public affairs expert Sherman agreed that Bush's ability to reverse the gloomy economic trend will determine his popularity when the 1992 election arrives.

Pocketbook issues are the most sensitive among voters and Bush must be sensitive to such feelings as the economy shrinks, jobs disappear and spending power evaporates, he said.

"He's got to be careful that it doesn't last too long," said Sherman. "I think the American people are fairly forgiving, as long as they see things are turning around."

Inspiration and hard work produce a rainbow of tradition

By Debbie Lovatt

Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — In early summer when sheep are sheared Khalil Burgan goes to Mafrqa and Irbid, in the north of Jordan, to fetch fleeces directly from the bedouins there.

Lena, Khalil's wife, supplies the ideas and inspiration whilst Khalil takes care of the administrative side of the small soft furnishings business the couple established two years ago.

Walking into the uncluttered shop, close to the Second Circle, one sees household furnishings ranging from slippers to rugs to

tea cosies and place settings, as well as a few clothes and pieces of jewellery.

For two years now, Lena has been merging traditional designs with present-day needs. One example of this is a bathroom set — towels, bathmats, bathrobes and slippers are tied in with the same coordinating embroidery or fabric — and all items are washable.

The business is small. One man works to make rugs on the loom seven or eight hours a day (except Fridays), eleven women are employed to put together the sewn items and forty to fifty

women — most from the Palestinian refugee camps around Amman — are employed to work at home on embroidery.

For the women who work at home, the problem of not being able to go out to work whilst maintaining a house and raising a family is overcome.

Khalil explained that "all the women start from scratch and we train them. They are paid according to how much they produce. In the beginning they make JD 20 — 30 per month, but once they are more proficient they can earn over JD 150 per month."

Many colourful rugs are displayed in the shop. Khalil, who also works as a civil engineer, describes why their creation is a long process: "After getting the wool from the bedouin in the north it is taken in two trucks to Wala Stream in Wadi Mujib. Two or three people stay there overnight to wash it and dry it in the sun. The wool is stored in the shop and then sent out in batches to women in Jerash and Madaba to be combed and spun. The women use the traditional spinning-top kind of spindle. Balls of wool are then returned here for dyeing. We use imported dye as natural dye is very expensive and hard to find."

Once the wool is dyed it is ready to be transformed into rugs. The weaver follows a

sketched design and works the loom until the rug is completed. Shapes such as triangles are sewn by hand.

For rugs and products with embroidery, Lena has researched old regional designs as well as Islamic patterns. The colours, however, may not be traditional as the range is now larger since man-made dyes are available.

On one cushion there is the design of a bird. The idea was taken from the "Bethlehem thobe (dress)." Women used to embroider two such birds on their dresses and although the meaning behind this is now lost, the bird motif is synonymous with the Bethlehem area.

Lena uses all the leftover bits of material in many ways, but patchwork is, perhaps, the most charming: "We looked through many books about costume and found that although patchwork is not often used now, it was once quite common," said Khalil, whilst turning upside down his desk to find some of the books about costume and design which were hidden under a colourful array of semi-finished embroidered cloth, cushions and other items ready for a harsh quality check before being completed.

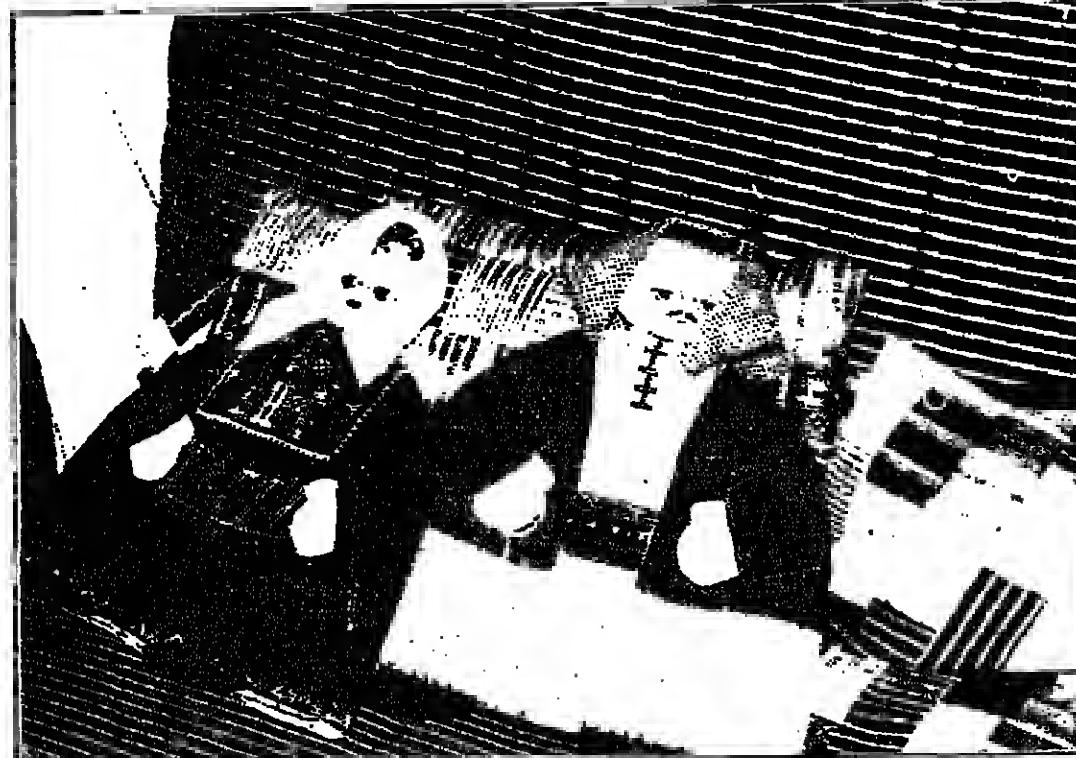
One of Lena's latest ideas is covering photograph albums to be given as a gift to new parents. The inspiration for this idea is obvious —

Khalil is the proud father of a two-week old baby girl.

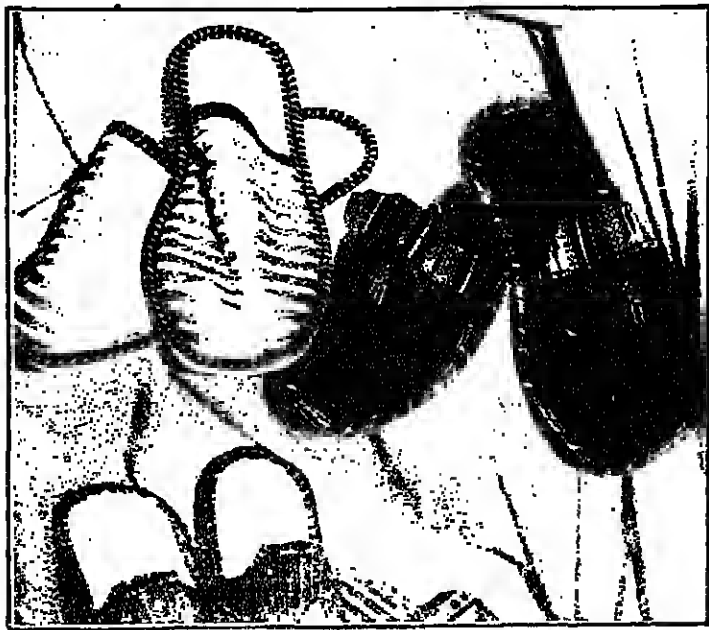
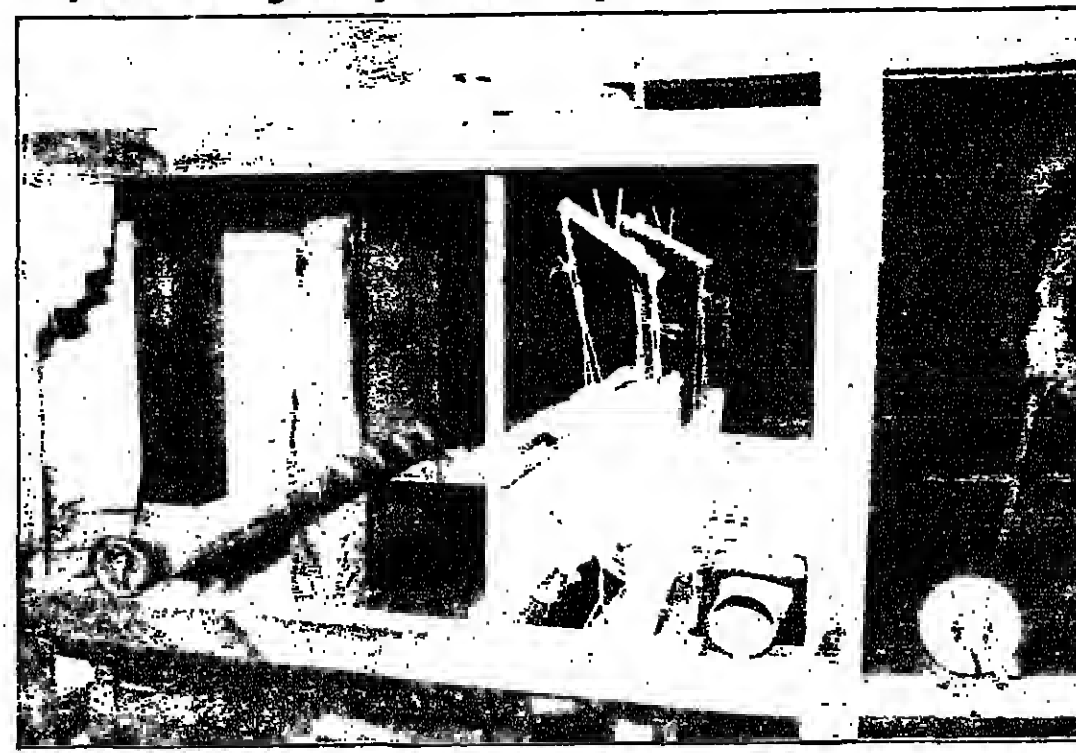
Happily, this small business, which aims to use as much local labour and materials as possible and keep alive and popular the traditional designs of the region, has not suffered irrevocably from the damaging effects of the Gulf crisis.

"When the Gulf crisis started many of our competitors, who were less interested in quality than the money from selling their products to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, gave up. Then after Christmas, the business stopped for about two months. The slowdown was because people were waiting before paying for goods already received and because overseas orders couldn't be shipped. Things have picked up again now and the reduced pace caused by the Gulf situation gave us plenty of time to think of new ideas and future plans."

However much Lena and Khalil are able to expand their flourishing enterprise, one thing that worries the couple is the problem of others copying their ideas. "We are pushing for a copyright to protect handicrafts and designs because as yet there is no such law here," said the concerned Khalil, afraid that the hardwork and investment he and Lena had put into their project would be wasted if others in the business took their ideas.



Husband and wife tea-cosies (above). The loom stands idle (below) after a rug has just been completed.



Slippers made to match bathrobes and towels

Recovery effort under way to save Africa's heritage

By Clare Pedrick

ROME — African countries are in danger of losing their cultural heritage, archaeologists have warned. Museum collections across the continent are deteriorating because of an acute lack of funds for basic equipment and a shortage of trained museum curators and preservationists.

High humidity and insects have already taken their toll on some of the finest pieces, say experts. From Abidjan to Khartoum, and from Tunis to Lagos, masks, textiles and carvings have been eaten away by insects and mold. Human marauders have done the rest. Poor security and inadequate cataloguing in many museums have made life all too easy for Africa's growing army of art thieves. Now a Rome-based agency



An African ceremonial mask

has launched a salvage operation to rescue Africa's crumbling heritage. Conservation experts and archaeologists at the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) have

started a 10-year programme to "improve training for museum staff members: 12 curators and researchers from all over Africa have been invited to ICCROM's headquarters in the Italian capital to take part in a 10-month course to learn how to store, catalogue, repair, treat and preserve their artifacts. ICCROM officials hope to train at least 100 museum employees in the programme, called Prevention in Museums of Africa (PREMA), by the end of the decade.

The Rome-based group will also send teams of experts to various nations to carry out a three-month, on-site training course and to help local museums organise their collections. An ICCROM team has already visited Ghana. Next on the list are the Ivory Coast and Zambia.

The man behind the project is Gael de Guichen, a 49-year-old French citizen who is assistant to ICCROM's director. A chemical engineer by training, De Guichen has made archaeology his specialty and has taught restoration and conservation techniques in Mali, Niger, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt as well as in Thailand, Pakistan and India.

At the ICCROM headquarters in Rome's picturesque Trastevere quarter, De Guichen and his team have long taught courses ranging from architectural conservation to the preservation of mural paintings. The African programme is a new departure to try to fill a specific and very pressing need, he said.

"In Africa there is simply no possibility to train in conservation and preservation," De Guichen explained. "For example, in the city of Jos, in Nigeria, there is a six-to-eight-month museum curator course which dedicates just one month to conservation. In Europe it takes four years. It's a bit like training to be a doctor in two months. Of course, these countries have so many other problems that they can't begin to think about organising courses at a national level."

Funding for the programme, \$700,000 annually, com-

es partly from the United Nations Economic and Social Council, to which ICCROM belongs. But the bulk of the cost is met by private donations from organisations such as the Getty Trust and the Ford Foundation and the governments of Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Scandinavia. De Guichen estimates that the 10-year project will cost \$8.5 million.

It is already too late for many museum collections. In Abidjan's National Museum insects have attacked a large proportion of the wooden artifacts. More than 2,000 have been completely destroyed, and many others badly damaged. In the Jos National Museum, termites reduced a pile of exhibits to yellow dust in just six days. Africa's extreme heat and the high humidity in some countries create the perfect conditions for insects and mold to multiply. Once they have infested a piece, say experts, there is no stopping them. "A museum is a concentration of risks," said De Guichen.

African museum collections are more vulnerable than those in other parts of the world because the African objects often are made of organic materials — wood, bark, feathers, horn and animal hair. "It's a race against time," said Friedrich Zink, ICCROM's technical officer and an expert in conserving and restoring objects in tropical climates. Before joining the Rome group earlier this year, German-born Zink spent four years in Kenya. "There the main problem was the heat and humidity which provided a good environment for insects, moths and termites," he said. "It's a tragedy to see these things being destroyed."

Zink and De Guichen took part in the most recent on-site training programme in Ghana. The ICCROM team spent three months with museum staff members, helping them create an environment that would preserve the pieces from the elements, from insects and from would-be thieves. "When we arrived it was just like walking into a storage room," said De

Guichen. "Everything was just stacked up on top of each other. We had to rearrange the whole building, make an armour-plated door, re-establish natural ventilation and close the exhibits off from sources of dust and insects."

Before he left Ghana, De Guichen invited the two best students in the training programme to attend the first 10-month course in Rome. Recently arrived in the Italian capital, Kwame Amoah Labi, 32, and Raymond Orison Agbo, 34, are the first to admit that their museums were badly in need of a facelift. "There had been a lot of neglect," said Labi, curator of the Institute of African Studies Museum at the University of Ghana. "A lot of the textiles had crumbled to bits — dresses, battle smocks and lincolns made out of beaten bark. Before, pieces that were brought into the museum were not treated, so

that if they were infected with 'silverfish' or 'moth' it soon spread through the whole collection."

"The training course has made a big difference," noted Agbo, keeper of the Ghana National Museum in Accra. "We still don't have a great deal of equipment, but it has sparked off quite a bit of interest and a new awareness. Since the course, many more museums have been opened and reorganised."

In other countries that have taken part in the project, curators have reported an encouraging reaction from officials in charge of the purse strings. In most African nations, museums have traditionally been a low-priority item, but in several cases governments have responded to the ICCROM initiative by raising salaries and increasing staff.

The awareness battle is one of the biggest issues faced by ICCROM, the team says.

Part of the problem stems from a fundamental difference in attitude toward art.

"In Europe, art is a piece that is created for its own beauty," said Zink. "In Africa, art is a functional piece — a mask for a religious ceremony, a chief's regalia, a smoking pipe or a container. These things will be highly decorated, and those decorations will have a symbolic meaning, but the reason they were made is to be used."

For the same reason, Zink added, it is hard to find much in the way of truly old pieces on the African continent. "If a carved item is more than 50 years old, you can be happy," he said. "Because these things are functional pieces they get worn out and when they are no longer useful they are thrown away."

If the African concept of art is different from that of the West, then its museums should also be different, argued Emmanuel Arinze,

director of the Nigerian Commission for Museums and Monuments. Museums are not popular in Africa. They are considered places for the intellectual elite. "A lot of people who would come to museums don't, because it doesn't mean anything to them," said Arinze, who has recently joined the Rome team as a teacher for the first PREMA course.

His ideal museum, he says, "would tell an African story that would have as its main focus African problems, using things on the continent so that average people from the rural areas would want to come in. There would be objects, but they would be used in a totally different way — not just that they are art, but that they have a function. The approaches that we have adopted in some of our museums are basically static. We need to talk to the people, send a message." — World News Link.



A carved wooden figure of a child, from the Livingstone Museum, Zambia.



BEFORE: In an African museum, priceless artifacts were stockpiled in disorganised piles.



AFTER: With the help of an ICCROM team, this museum has organised, stored and catalogued its collection.

كلنا من البشر

Happy occasions and exams

By Maha Addasi

WHAT is the relationship between happy occasions and exams?

Well, they are directly proportional to each other. In English, it means that they come at the same time of year, together, in unison, sawa-sawa (as they say in Arabic).

Of course during happy occasions, people visit family and friends. On such visits adults talk, have fun and laugh. Kids destroy their Christmas gifts. And students who have Tawjihi, O levels, A levels, or International Baccalaureates to study for are cooped up in their rooms "trying" to study.

Notice that I say they are trying to study. It is past Christmas now but everyone is making plans for the New Year's party and they are not talking in hushed tones and the person who is supposed to be studying for the exams, that would determine his or her future, can hear every word they are saying and just can not concentrate on studying!

It is not an enjoyable situation if you are one of those students. In fact it is a dilemma. The students can not study because they are caught up in all the excitement, but can't join the group because they would be so busy feeling guilty they wouldn't be able to enjoy themselves.

Little visitors in the house at times like these can be absolute terrors, because once they discover an "older" person sitting all by himself, while everyone else is having fun, they start to pay him little visits, just out of curiosity.

The problem is the students studying in their rooms are easily distracted, and if a cute little kid, for instance, manages to find her way into a student's room the student couldn't resist talking to the little "angel."

"Why are you all by yourself?" she'd asked the student. "I'm studying for my exams," he'd say.

Soon another kid walks in and the two tiny tots scramble out, and run screaming and shouting and having fun. But they will be back. Now that they found that student's room, he will be left alone.

When the student's mother realises that her son is not studying, she starts to become uneasy and takes the guests' mothers aside to tell them to keep their children from going into her son's room.

The question is, how much control do the guests have



over their children?

If the guests have little control over their kids, or don't want to be too harsh with their kids at a happy time like this, the host is in trouble. An example I witnessed was a time when a lady trying to discipline her son told him: "come over here so that I can hit you."

Would any kid in his/her right mind listen to this and comply?

At this point the host is regretting having let anyone visit her at a time when her son is studying. Not only is he not enjoying himself, he is being tortured by the noise. She should have made herself unavailable by going out of the house to visit other people and left her son to study.

But now that the situation is the way it is, the mother has to do something to save the day. She becomes more firm with her guests. Push comes to shove, guests get angry, grab their children, cancel all the plans they had with their hosts for the New Year, and before anything could be done to remedy the situation the guests have all left.

What follows is a feeling of complete emptiness. Mothers you haven't lost your friends, they just need a little time to understand the situation. But what you have just done is given your children the best gift. Because to someone — who is studying, the best Christmas and New Year's gift is silence.

A lot of people feel for you students, study hard have a happy New Year & good luck with your exams!

There will be other Christmases to enjoy...

PEN PAL

Dear Sir:

I would like to have a pen-friend between the age 11-14 years. My hobbies are: Dancing, writing books and novels, travelling, writing and swimming.

My favourite singers are Elton John and Whitney Houston.

My address is:

Sara Gustavsson
Masking, 7
S-27400 Skurup
Sweden

Weekend Crossword

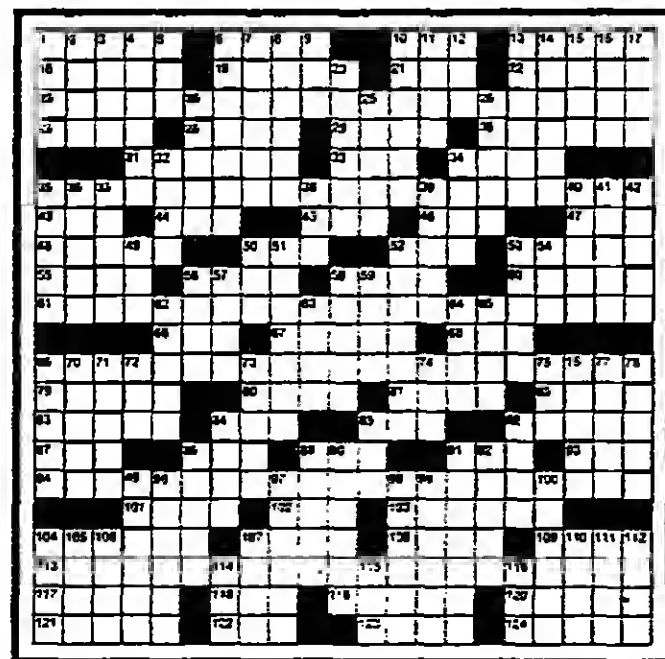
BESTIARY
By Olive Dunn

ACROSS
1 Guffaw
2 Landslide
3 Old goat
4 agency
5 Greeting
6 Stern sheathing
7 Ditties
8 Put on
9 Smooth
10 breathing
11 Start of verse
12 Jacob's brother
13 Baller
14 movement
15 Actor's goal
16 Three-set var.
17 Naval units
18 Tokyo formery
19 Fr
20 psychotherapy
21 More of verse

43 Musical perception
44 Denial
45 No — ands, or but's
46 Existed
47 Actress
48 A daughter
49 of Zulu
50 Elac unit
51 Sound
52 Rigid
53 Personal
54 Concocted
55 Rigid overhang
56 Port cape
57 TV's Lou Grant
58 More of verse
59 Friend of Larn and Guffy

67 Intrigue
68 Gr. letter
69 More of verse
70 Plus qualities
71 Once upon
72 Temple
73 One
74 Deep or high
75 beginning
76 Bitter drug
77 Soft voices
78 Lascia's doctor
79 Short
80 Pacifying
81 material
82 — off (begin)
83 Soft sub
84 Occule
85 Insure victory
86 More of verse
87 Rambie

92 Automaton
93 Khaviam
94 Accumulate
95 Dots
96 Repercussion
97 Fomies
98 Incan
99 Confict
100 Plant aim
101 arrow-shaped
102 Do handwork
103 USSR river
104 Peppier plant
105 Do handwork
106 Sino of
107 Get to
108 Get to
109 Article of
110 Consider
111 By way of
112 Indifferent



Last Week's Cryptograms

- Peer kooky gal thought she was laundering dirty money by putting her checkbook in the washing machine.
- I find one should be very careful about visiting when enemy in-laws are overseas.
- Highbrow scholar chose high-flown language to belittle his students.
- Final hung jury let the felon go free. Angry judge ruled for a retrial.

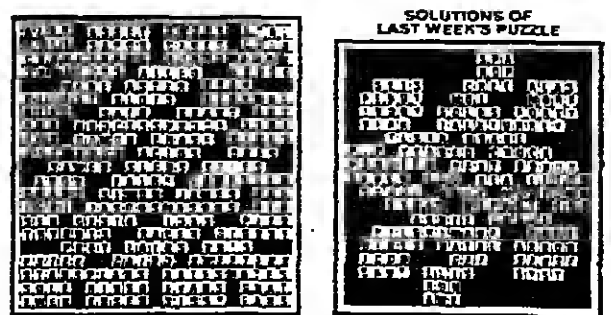
CRYPTOGRAMS

1. NOICL FNL JIOI SEC OZCCNO GIB AFVCNVC
VE ASSNO KFZLAF IB NUIJHCX GHCCNO
GNCV ME. —By Gordon Miller

2. ACTORFLOAM LFFRCHERF L BRZ
PURFTALKE PM BMOC ERZ PURPRO
RFRCHER. —By Ed Hedderley

3. WD-LTTL NOEN, "EAA WABIZ WORI FCDNT
NFXOEBIZ NCTIL WE CDDI DX RXDDU"

4. MEYTRF HIBOYDF MEIDI ZLISN FGRSM
ZUN-HOLY GLOOM. —By E.L. Livingston



JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Dec. 27

8:30 — Bill Cosby Show

Venicia falls in love with a man who also likes to keep his old girlfriend, she is shocked but soon meets the old girlfriend and finds out why this is so.

9:10 Black Forest Clinic

The Miraculous Well

All of a sudden in the town there is a water well that cures illness. The town folks decide this is good tourism business. But Prof. Bregman does not subscribe to this belief.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Movie of the Week

Friday, Dec. 28

8:30 Coach

Hayden has got lots of work to do. His secretary is off on vacation and his daughter is busy too. He has to beg for some help.

9:10 Shakespeare

10:00 News in English

10:20 Detective In The House

Moscow on Melrose

Ukrainian immigrant Boris is in deep trouble. He owes a gang some money and the only way to get the money is from his sister. Boris gets killed, his sister disappears and detective Wyman arrives on the scene.

Saturday, Dec. 29

8:30 Good Morning Miss Bliss

Stevie, the famous singer, is to visit her old school and give a concert there. Someone decides to turn this event to his advantage... and she is in for a surprise.

9:00 Encounter

9:30 Feature Film

Cloud Dancer

Starring: Jennifer O'Neill and David Caradine

This is the dramatic life-story of the acrobatic champion Brad Randolph who al-

ways lived a dangerous life but who changed his lifestyle and attitude upon becoming a father.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Cont. of the Feature Film

Sunday, Dec. 30

8:30 Open House

Murder He Wrote

A weird agent drops by the office for a business transaction... Ted grabs him quickly believing he got lucky... he is in for a surprise.

9:10 Great Journeys

The Ho Chi Minh Trail

In this episode we get to find out what happened to the famous Ho Chi Minh Trail, which ran through Laos and Cambodia. The trail was vital for the Viet-Kong war against the Americans in the 60's.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Midnight Caller

Do You Believe In Miracles

A small statue of Jesus Christ disappears a few days before Christmas. Jack, the police and someone, who believes in miracles are determined to get it back.

Monday, Dec. 31

8:30 Golden Girls

Our heroines lost a winning lottery card; they go crazy and look for it and when they finally find it they give it up for a good reason.

9:10 Derrick

Lisa almost got killed; suspicion hovers over her, younger husband... but Derrick's investigation proves otherwise.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

Anthony and Cleopatra

One of the ultimate love-theme movies and a Shakespearean classic play... love prevails over glory and influence, with a tragic ending.

Monaco woos industrialists

along with jet set

By Marilyn Angus

The Associated Press

MONACO — In this glamorous tax haven, money's playground by the sea, the idle rich are making room for the busy, hustling rich.

Aristocrats still risk fortunes at the casino's velvet-covered tables, but the 154-hectare (380-acre) principality is catering for a new breed of wealth and power.

It seeks the working rich who may spend a week in Monaco, not six months like the grand dukes of a century ago, to check on an industrial investment, watch the Grand Prix or attend a business convention.

On a stroll through the casino gardens, you're more likely to meet carpet salesmen from Toronto than European royalty. Last year, Monaco welcomed 50,000 convention-goers.

Tourism now generates only one-fourth of the 5-billion-dollar gross national product. Gambling, once the government's mainstay, brings in only 4 per cent. Banking accounts for 35 per cent and light industry 27 per cent. Monaco now has 50 banks, and expects more.

Prince Rainier, who has ruled since 1949, sought to preserve and capitalise on Monaco's reputation for glamour when he called for economic diversification.

"The government has put its money behind prestige and

luxury," said a public relations officer for the principality. "It used to bank on the very rich. Today it has sought to develop a clientele of the slightly less rich."

Hotel statistics are revealing. Monaco has 2,400 rooms, 80 per cent in the luxury category going for \$200 to \$450 a night. Fewer than 100 rooms cost less than \$50.

Officials try to keep industry and tourism apart. Hardly any of the 3 million day visitors last year went near the industrial park of Fontvieille, a peninsula reclaimed from the sea.

Many of Monaco's 700 industrial companies are there. Most are in such high-tech, non-polluting fields as pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and engineering.

A value-added tax on the new commercial activities is the largest source of revenue in Monaco's annual budget of \$510 million.

Fontvieille accommodates both factories and company headquarters, stacked atop each other in skyscrapers. Nearby is a new sports stadium, three-star hotel, heliport and Monaco's only low-income housing.

It was the brainchild of Prince Rainier, who saw a future in real estate. A forest of skyscrapers, eyesores to many visitors, looms against a background of steep mountains, dwarfing hillside villas built in the 19th century.

Meanwhile, Monaco's train station has been put underground, and architects unveiled plans last year for three floating islands with their own stores and homes, connected to the mainland by bridges and ferries.

Commercial or residential space in Monaco generally is more expensive than in Paris and New York. A two-room apartment in Fontvieille rents for \$3,000 a month, and cheaper accommodations are hard to find.

Housing has become a major headache. The government gives priority for state-owned housing and rent subsidies of up to 50 per cent to the natives, called Monegasques, but demand exceeds supply. Many apartments are owned by investors who spend little time in them.

Nightlife revolves around a few expensive discotheques and clubs, and cultural events geared to the wealthy establishment.

Young residents complain of little to do. Monaco has only one movie theatre, no discount or department stores and no major shopping centre.

There is virtually no unemployment, yet Monegasques — about 4,500 in a population of 27,000 — worry about the future.

"The problem is not finding jobs for young Monegasques, it's finding jobs suited to their educational degrees and qual-

ifications," said Stephane Valeri, 28.

He heads the Association of Young Monegasques, founded in 1986 to handle their employment and housing problems and help them start businesses. Citizens now own less than 3 per cent of commerce and industry in Monaco, but Valeri said new opportunities were opening in services and the law.

The government tries to dispel the myth that all Monegasques are rich. But Monegasques also have a reputation as poor workers.

"Some Monegasques ... adopt a superior attitude and feel they can get away with anything because they know they can't be fired," a government spokesperson said.

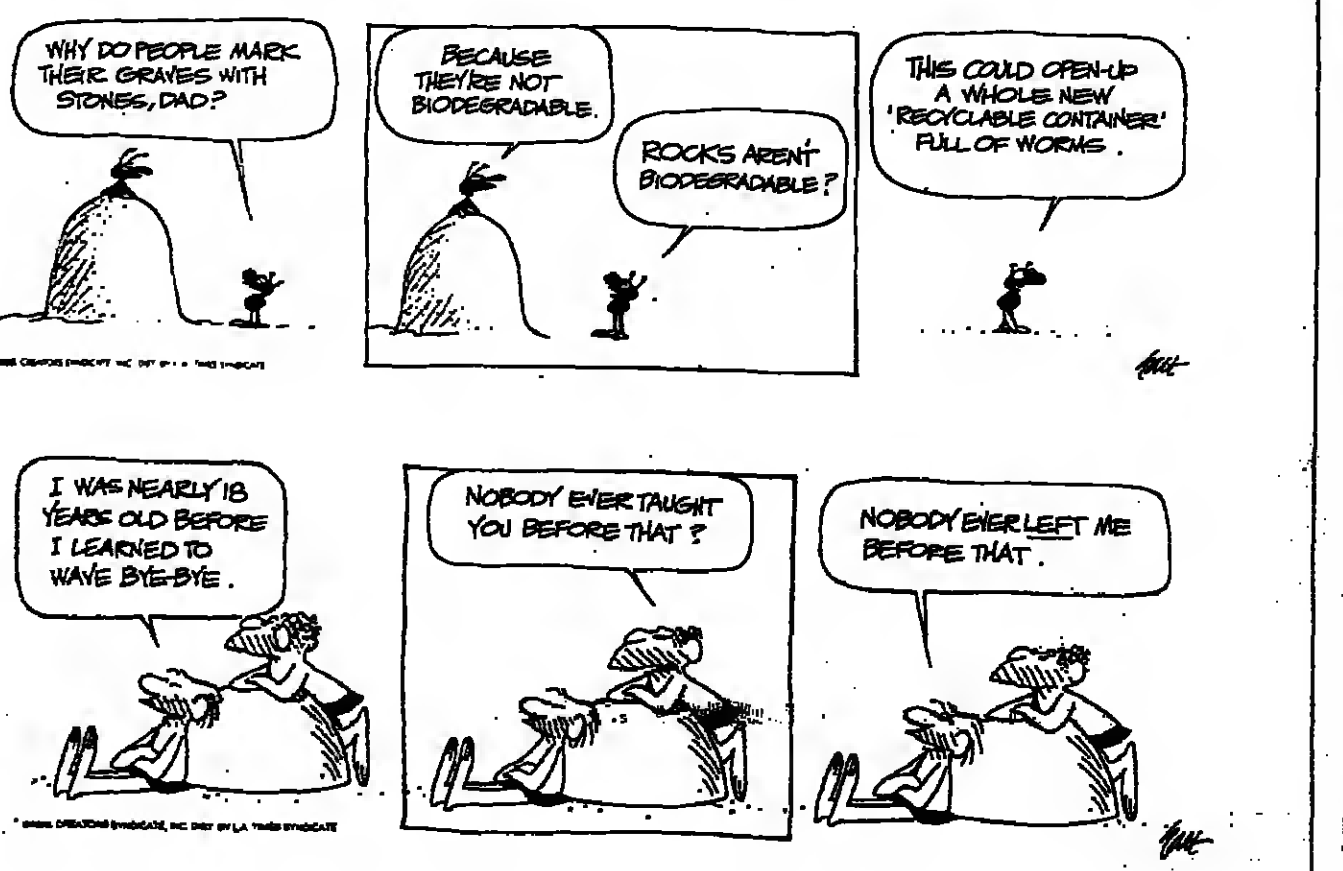
The 5,000 Italians who cross the border each day to work in hotels and restaurants comprehensive health insurance, higher wages and the first crack at vacant jobs.

Residents of this fiscal paradise, except for French nationals who have arrived since 1957, pay no taxes on income, capital gains or an inheritance if it comes directly from a parent or spouse.

Security and respectability are basic tenets.

"Monaco is the type of place where you think twice about dropping candy wrappers," said a retired Greek executive who has lived here 35 years. "You feel very safe and life is very calm."

B.C.



Chabrol's Madame Bovary risks ruffling French feathers

By Michela Wrong

Reuter

PARIS — Adultery is usually a bankable theme for French cinema, and Claude Chabrol usually a bankable director. Both hit the screen in Paris this week in Chabrol's latest work, *Madame Bovary*, a 1990s version of Gustave Flaubert's much-filmed literary classic. Yet the project's success is far from assured. The popularity of the novel, which once actually landed Flaubert in court for "outraging public morals," is now a positive handicap for prospective directors, who risk being pilloried for distorting a national favourite. The knives are already being sharpened for Chabrol, whose movie starring russet-haired actress Isabelle Huppert drew capacity audiences

to matinee premieres in Paris.

The daily *Liberation's* critic found the film "laborious" and "frozen," while *Le Parisien's* expert said the big screen feature had a made-for-television look.

The problem, critics admitted, is that everyone has his own image of Emma Bovary — the frustrated country doctor's wife who poisons herself — and few want to see it tainted by a director's imaginings, even if that director is Chabrol.

Brimming with expectations to which modest origins in no way entitle her, her head full of romantic novels, young Emma makes the mistake of marrying a doltish country physician.

She swiftly realises her error. Bored to distraction in

the stifling town of Yonville, she takes a series of lovers and adopts the lavish lifestyle of a great lady.

Her debts become insurmountable. When she realises the lovers she has idealised will not save her from the trap closing in, she takes arsenic and dies in agony.

"I have remained faithful to Gustave," promises Chabrol, who confesses to being totally obsessed by the novel he discovered on the day he lost his virginity.

Maybe too faithful. Scene by scene, phrase by phrase, the maker of such masterpieces as *The Cousins* and *The Girlfriends* has meticulously, some would say slavishly, reproduced the story Flaubert sweated over for five years.

Afraid of straying from the

novel, rewritten laboriously by Flaubert in his search for a pure, apparently effortless style, Chabrol has failed to give the film a needed creative kick in the pants.

"Faced with his obsession, Chabrol seems paralysed," comments *Liberation*. "To each his own Emma," shrugs *Le Parisien*.

Flaubert poured his soul into his heroine, purging a hatred of the petit bourgeoisie, contempt for small-town society and exasperation with a semi-invalid existence in rural Normandy.

"*Madame Bovary, c'est moi*," (I am Madame Bovary) the author once said, acknowledging the identification.

The book was inspired by the local story of a young

doctor's wife who had committed suicide, suggested to Flaubert by a friend who disapproved of his romantic gushings and thought he needed a more realistic topic.

When the book was first published in serial form in 1856 the authorities were shocked by the frank account of female frustration and desires, calling Emma lascivious and depraved. Flaubert was put on trial.

But the author was not the only person to see himself mirrored in the heroine — women all over France had recognised their own dilemmas and the work swiftly became a bestseller.

"My poor Bovary no doubt suffers and weeps in 20 villages of France, at this very moment," said Flaubert, who was acquitted on charges of

affronting public morals.

The portrait of Emma was so accurate it gave rise to the term "bovarysme" — meaning romantic dissatisfaction, a longing to escape the banality of everyday existence.

Huppert, who specialises in portraying introverts driven to desperate acts, sees the tale in more feminist terms.

She believes the heroine has been unfairly dismissed by critics who fail to take into account the restrictions women endured in the 19th century.

"The term 'bovarysme' is used to define anyone who lives in a dream world, who suffers from melancholy," the 38-year-old actress said in a recent radio interview.

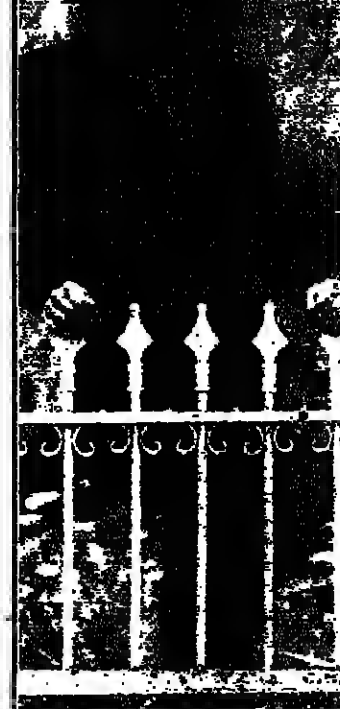
"But I found a different Madame Bovary, someone

braver than that, a fighter battling against a very rigid, very misogynist society which offered very little room for manoeuvre."

Huppert's portrayal, which includes a gruesome death-bed scene, is already being hailed as the "role of a career" for the actress, who sprang to international attention in *The Lacemaker*.

The French, enchanted by the recent award-winning adaptation of the classic *Cyrano De Bergerac*, starring Gerard Depardieu, have acquired something of a taste for filmed literature.

But unless audiences differ with the critics, Chabrol's 50-million-franc (\$8.8 million) project may go the same way as the eight other screen versions of *Bovary* made since the 1930s, all now virtually forgotten.



Isabelle Huppert

Victoria Principal combines business with acting

By Ronald Clarke

Reuter

LOS ANGELES — Actress Victoria Principal — Pam Ewing of the oil-and-sex television series *Dallas* — loves clinching a big deal in real life.

She has an acre of land in Beverly Hills, home of millionaires and Hollywood stars, and the latest Mercedes sports car to prove she knows how to do it.

"My career is a tug of war between my love for business and my love for acting," she said. "I am a full-time businesswoman and a full-time actress, and I love making a deal."

Victoria Principal Productions — "a very modest name," she says with a laugh — has become one of the most successful small production companies in the U.S. television industry.

She has produced and starred in half a dozen major television productions, including *Naked Lie*, *Blind Witness*, *Sparks* and *Just Life*, and is completing another of her productions, *Nightmare*.

"I find producing the projects in which I appear is double the duty and also double the pleasure," the slim, mini-skirted, 41-year-old actress said in an interview.

At a time when the industry is turning to smaller budget films, her company has recently taken on more staff including a number of big names.

"Money has never been my main goal," she said. "When there is a project I like, I must be a part of it. I want to act in it. I want to produce it."

"And then there is the joy of pitching it to the television networks. I think to myself: Here is this great idea and

they are going to love it," she said with a gurgling laugh.

Principal says she never lets business get in the way of her marriage to plastic surgeon Harry Glassman.

"From the beginning we agreed we would never go longer than three weeks without seeing each other. When I am on location, he flies out every other weekend," she said.

Principal received a good break at the start of her film career when she was given the part of a mistress alongside Paul Newman in *The Life And Times Of Judge Roy Bean* in 1971. The role changed her life.

"I was catapulted from anonymity to being known all over the United States in three months, and this is shocking to a young person," she said.

"I had no family or friends in Los Angeles and so there

was no one I could turn to reconcile my confusion about this."

Subsequent film roles were less memorable and Principal, the daughter of a sergeant major, gave up acting. She could always fall back on her old job — teaching backgammon.

She became an actors' agent and went to law school in the hope she could become a studio executive.

Then came *Dallas* in 1978. Principal, who has also used her business instincts to make a string of successful investments, was said to have negotiated a deal for \$25,000 an episode. By the fifth season, she had more than doubled her salary.

"I finally left *Dallas* because I wanted to grow as an actress and because I wanted to get my production company running," she said.

"I devoted myself to my

company for the next two years, working full time in the office, taking meetings and learning how to buy and develop projects.

"I have a good track record because of all the projects I developed only one has not been made."

She also wrote a keep fit book, *The Body Principal*, followed by *The Diet Principal* and *The Beauty Principal*.

Principal is a dedicated actress. For *Blind Witness* she attended the blind institute and had special lenses fitted so she could experience what it was like to be blind.

"I wore them from when I got up until just before I went to bed so I could understand what it was like to live in the dark," she said.

"I went on vacation with my husband during that time and I told him I would have to spend half of my time

blind. My husband is the best sport and it was very interesting for both of us."

"He was my eyes and when we were walking along a bluff he would describe the bluff and the people nearby. There was an intimacy that doesn't exist between two seeing people. And I had the luxury of being able to see the next day."

In *Nightmare*, she plays Linda Hammond, a mother whose house is accosted no matter how far from a friend's house. Hammond decides she will stop at nothing to protect her daughter, even if it means taking the law into her own hands.

"I did not have to do research on my role because I am a stepmother with two children and all I had to imagine was one of them being harmed," Principal said.



Victoria Principal

Oscar-winning film shines attention on Sioux Indians

KANSAS CITY (Agencies) — Perhaps the biggest winner at the Academy Awards wasn't Kevin Costner's epic western *Dances With Wolves*, but the American Indians depicted in the film.

"This is probably going to have a huge impact on the Sioux people," said Tim Giago, publisher of the *Lakota Times*, based in Rapid City, South Dakota, where many Sioux live.

The most common view of Sioux Indians, who make up most of the population on the six huge reservations in South Dakota, is that of a people lost in poverty, unemployment and alcohol, and unable to emerge from underneath a blanket of federal handouts.

Statistics back up the stark realities of life on the reservations, but Giago and other Sioux leaders say something like *Dances* helps people get beyond their surface understanding of American Indians.

The movie, which swept the Awards by winning seven of 12 Oscars for which it was nominated, including Best Picture, portrayed a white soldier living among the Lakota Sioux tribe during the period just after the American Civil War and at the start of what became known as the Indian Wars.

"We're certainly going to encourage people to come visit the reservations," Ralph Moran, tribal chairman for the Rosebud Indian Reservation, said.

"It was a very positive movie and we hope it has an impact on the reservation in terms of tourism. You know the state is certainly going to try and cash in on it."

Rosebud also is the home of Doris Leader Charge, who translated Michael Blake's

acceptance speech into Lakota during the award ceremonies. Blake won the Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay, based on his novel *Dances With Wolves*.

Cosiner, who directed, starred and co-produced the film, opted to use the native Lakota language of western Sioux tribes with English subtitles — a move that proved popular with moviegoers and Sioux leaders.

Before the success of the film, international attention had been focused on the Sioux Indians following the December centennial observance of the Wounded Knee Massacre, which culminated a year that South Dakota Governor George Mickelson had called the "year of reconciliation."

The National Park Service is looking into establishing either a national memorial or monument for the more than 200 Sioux Indians cut down a century ago by U.S. troops. Last month, the United States tribes met to begin working out tribal differences on the issue of returning land in the Black Hills originally promised to the Sioux in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty.

The U.S. Supreme Court awarded money, now in a trust totalling \$253.6 million, for reparations. However, the tribe has been split for many years on whether to take the money or press for land in the Black Hills.

Senator Bill Bradley, a Democrat of New Jersey, presented a bill in 1988 that would return federal land in the Black Hills to the tribe, but the bill has been stalled in committee.

There has been talk that the bill will resurface soon. "Right now we're in

vogue, and we should show people what we are about — let them know about the good and the bad," Giago said.

"For once, there's something good. I'm sick and tired of the eastern (east cost) media coming here and going away to win awards with the same stories about alcohol and poverty on the reservation."

Giago, who grew up on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in southwest South Dakota, is currently a Neiman Fellow at Harvard University and is among the nominees for this year's Pulitzer Prize for commentary.

"I predicted that if they followed the script, it would be successful," he said.

"When I walked out of that movie, I had a big lump in my throat. I looked around and a lot of white people had a sad look on their faces too," said Alex White Plume, a member of Oglala Sioux Executive Committee. "Side by side, I couldn't believe it when they walked out like that."

The film shows Indians as people protecting their land rather than as savages, they say.

"I think it portrays the Indians the way it should. In other western movies, they portrayed the Indians as the bad guys, as scary people," said Nathan Chasing His Horse, 15, who played a young Sioux named Smiles A Lot in the film.

"We were just people trying to live our lives. ... We were nice and kind people," said Nathan, a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe whose family lives outside the town of White River, South Dakota.

By Katia Sabet

CAIRO — He was a poor French boy, but he had a dream. He loved painting and the movies, but he also had to support himself. So Rene Laloux found a job in a psychiatric hospital and proceeded to set up painting, music and theatre workshops for the patients. In this unlikely setting he began a meteoric career that took him to the heights of fame and transformed the world of French cartoon movies.

Six years after he started work at the hospital, Laloux won the special Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival for a cartoon film he had made with his patients. The success of "La Planete Sauvage" (The Wild Planet) projected the young filmmaker into the magic world of animated characters and the comic strip.

In 1967, a year bubbling with creativity and new ideas, Laloux met Rene Folon, the French master of satirical drawing. He also began a long collaboration with Roland Topor, another creative giant who had just joined a new popular satirical magazine called *Harakiri*.

Together the two artists made two short films, "Les Temps Morts" (Empty Times) and "Les Escargots" (Snails). The works broke new ground both in content and graphics style and pioneered a new era in French cartoon art.

Cartoons have enjoyed a huge revival in Europe during the past 10 years, with France and Belgium in the lead. A whole host of new books, whose characters have become household names, is celebrated at an annual book festival in the western city of Angoulême. Very little of the material is aimed at children, and fans of the "B.D." (short

for bande dessinée — comic strip) consider the genre a new form of art.

Explains filmmaker Laloux, who was interviewed during a recent visit to Egypt: "We had our marching orders, so to speak. These were not cartoons, they were not for children and they were not comedy. We wanted to do something different, something fantastic, lyrical, poetic, provocative ... I was interested in sophisticated graphics and talented artists. I loved to work with artists in the same way as I had worked with the patients at the psychiatric hospital. I try to bring out their hidden talent."

Laloux admits that it wasn't hard to draw out the talent of a master like Topor, but transforming drawings into moving images is another matter. "The drawings have to be put into a dramatic context, they have to be brought to life, they must be given a rhythm and a pace in the narrative," he adds.

Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Tom and Jerry and all the other stars of the cartoon world are like the cast of a movie. They are the product of a lengthy creative process, which, like in an ordinary feature film, is controlled by the director. "The director is the boss. On the artistic level there is no democracy, and the work is the same for a cartoon as a real movie with actors. There are sets, music, dialogue, mixing, editing ... technically, it boils down to the same thing," says Laloux.

He is currently writing a book about the art he knows best because, he says, no one has done it before. "In my opinion the art of the cartoon is far richer, more inventive and grown-up than the art of making a film with actors. The whole phenomenon by

which the spectator identifies with the star of the screen is what makes the cinema magic, but at the same time it is a pretty simple equation. The cartoon is abstract, ideas are being projected on the screen that have no direct reference to the public," he explains.

Creators of cartoon films, therefore, must find a way to make sure that the audience can relate to the subject. The film has to carry a message. At the same time, Laloux notes, most of the movie moguls think of cartoons as kid stuff. "Most adults see children as having very limited minds that cannot receive too many messages and need simple thoughts. This is a very conformist and conventional vision of the child. To me, children are an ideal audience because the potential of their imagination is far greater than that of adults," he argues.

According to Laloux, his work at the psychiatric hospital gave him an insight into how the mind works as we age. His conclusion: "Adults are alienated and unhappy most of the time. Some of us escape that fate," he adds, laughing, "but in general the adult spectator has a lazy, disappointing mind."

Laloux is convinced that children need stimulating images to help them fulfill their creative potential as adults. He recalls with delight an occasion when his films were shown to an audience of 5- and 6-year-olds. "It was the most rewarding experience I have ever had. What an audience! They are very imaginative and critical at the same time." Laloux sees the cartoon as a potentially powerful educational tool, an idea currently explored by French educators. Meanwhile, he is planning an hour-long adaptation of the 18th cen-



Rene Laloux

tury fairy tale *The Beauty And The Beast*. He does not seem worried that the Disney Studio, with its considerable resources, is filming a version of the same story due out in about three years. "Mine will be made with little money, but it will come out in a year," Laloux says.

Other projects include a television series he is making with artist Jacques Colombat. "The theme is a little surreal, and 'green.' Earth is nothing more than a huge garbage can, and man leaves to find somewhere else to live. Objects and animals are left

alone, and they seize power." The filmmaker predicts that other art forms related to the cartoon are likely to develop further, particularly puppet shows such as the wildly popular TV *Muppets*. "One development we don't think about enough is that television calls for three-dimensional characters. I think this trend is going to grow, and soon. Another probable trend is the use of real actors dressed up to look like fantastic, incredible beings." Incredible? Nothing is in Laloux's world — World News Link.

Psychologists plead for help for disaster rescuers

By Graham Heathcote
The Associated Press

LONDON — Researchers who studied disasters and terrorist crimes say rescue workers can be as emotionally affected as survivors and relatives, and need careful counseling.

Police officers, ambulance workers and firefighters have quit their jobs because nobody talked to them about the mental strain, speakers told 700 delegates at a London conference of the British Psychological Society.

Margaret Mitchell, psychology lecturer at Glasgow University, said, "We need to learn how rescuers can finally put these traumatic experiences behind them and continue to operate effectively in their jobs."

Britain suffered a dozen disasters that claimed 1,000 lives within four years in the 1980s — including 150 deaths in two soccer stadiums 188 on a capsized English channel ferry, and 167 in a North Sea oil platform explosion.

Some rescuers involved also went abroad to help after earthquakes in Armenia, Iran and the Philippines.

Recently, four London firemen who fought the 1987 King's Cross subway station fire in which 31 people died were awarded a total of \$66,000 in damages for injuries that were almost exclusively psychological.

The claim was settled out of court and the men became the first members of the emergency services to receive compensation for such injuries.

The psychologists' meeting was held three days before the second anniversary of the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, which killed all 259 people on the airliner and 11 others on the ground in Lockerbie, Scotland.

"More than 2,000 police from Strathclyde (a Scottish region) were sent to Lockerbie, so that only limited psychological debriefing could be carried out," said Ms. Mitchell, who studied police officers working in the Lockerbie morgue.

"Many of them still think about what they saw and some of them say they could have got over the stress if there had been structured debriefing after each day's work. But that wasn't possible."

"There is often a feeling of alienation among the rescue services who have seen things that others cannot imagine."

Dr. David Duckworth, a Leeds University consulting psychologist to three police forces, said he knew of officers

so affected by horrors they saw that they were physically sick in the mornings before going to work.

"The effects of disaster on rescue workers can be as traumatic as shell shock and combat fatigue in warfare and as long lasting," said Dr. James Thompson, a psychologist at London's Middlesex Hospital who also runs a stress clinic helping disaster survivors.

"In every disaster, some people involved are mentally disabled because they are carrying such burden," Thompson said at a news conference.

"All the evidence we have suggests it is helpful if those working on a disaster are encouraged to talk about their reactions and decisions with psychologists and social workers, even within the team with someone who has done it before."

Thompson added, "we find some people are not helped by counseling. That's a challenge for which we are still trying to find the real factors and the real therapy."

He said authorities should tell relatives whatever they wanted to know even if the details were very painful, and they should have a legal right to information.

"They should be told everything — it would help them get over the shock," he said.

Iris Suzuki, a medical student who studied stress among 10 London ambulance workers, said, "the public expects ambulance crews to be superhuman and act like it, but deep down they react like any other human beings."

Dr. Jim Swire, a country doctor whose daughter Flora was killed on Pan Am Flight 103, said a deliberate effort was made to stop relatives from finding out what had happened.

"There were official moves to ensure that available information should not go to the relatives and it took a lot of pushing and shoving to change it," he said.

Swire is campaigning for Flight 103 families to be told everything about the bombing.

He expressed disappointment that the Home Office, which runs the police, has not set up professional and coordinated support groups to help relatives in future disasters.

"Some people believe the right thing to do is to hide things from relatives but nothing can happen to a relative to compare with the disaster. It is beneficial to relatives to talk about it," Swire said.

Considerable improvement in hearing quality The Triton 3000 - a world novelty from Munich

MUNICH (INP). Eight leading manufacturers of hearing-aids from Europe and the U.S.A. with an overall world market share of almost 50 per cent — will in future make use of standard system for programming "digital hearing-aids."

The system, which bears the designation PMC ("programmable multi channel") has been developed jointly in Munich and signifies a further "major step on the way to catering optimally for those with impaired hearing."

The more precisely a hearing-aid can be adapted to individual requirements, the better linguistic understanding becomes and consequently, the ability to hear again.

So far, the adjustment procedure was made more difficult on account of the fact

that conventional aids had to be set manually. This does not apply to digitally programmable hearing-aids — a still relatively new technique: with the aid of microprocessor-controlled programming units, the optimal data applying in each case for instance, for amplifying and harmonisation vis-a-vis the residual hearing capacity, are fed into the hearing-aid.

The new three-channel hearing-aid "Triton 3000" is being offered as a world novelty in terms of hearing-aid technology.

First of all, extensive trials were carried out internationally — in the Federal Republic of Germany as well as in Austria, Switzerland and the U.S.A. The transmission range of the device is

split up into three individual segments — in accordance with the sound frequencies — low, medium and high. By means of the programming unit, the three sectors can be adjusted individually independent of each other — in such a way, in order to assist the affected person as much as possible.

Such differentiation in accordance with frequency ranges has not been possible so far in the case of conventional one-channel hearing-aids. Although automatic regulation is also carried out in everyday operation here as well, this does not apply to the entire transmission range of the device, without actually taking different hearing problems in various sound frequency ranges into account.

"Digitally programmable hearing-aids" improve hearing quality (INP photo).

AIDS risk increased by other sexual diseases

By Claude Regin
Reuters

GENEVA — The risk of contracting AIDS may be greatly increased for people infected with other sexually transmitted diseases, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said in a study issued Thursday.

Lesions caused by some of the diseases may increase the chance of contracting the HIV virus which leads to AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) by as much as 300 per cent, the study said.

As a result, ideas about controlling sexually trans-

mitted infections were changing.

"Public health officials now know that attempts to control the spread of HIV or AIDS cannot be made without attempting to control other infections that are also transmitted sexually," Andre Meheus, head of WHO's programme on sexually transmitted diseases, told a news conference.

The study said other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) or infections received little publicity before the appearance of the AIDS epidemic a decade ago.

Yet each year an estimated 250 million people fall prey to STDs which can cause ster-

ility, stillbirths, miscarriages, blindness and even death.

The number of victims has been increasing for the past 25 years and is still going up.

"But only the advent of the HIV virus responsible for AIDS has prompted governments to pay attention to older diseases and infections," Meheus said.

"AIDS apart, they are not killer diseases. But they do cause some deaths although we do not have an overall figure."

Gonorrhea had declined in many industrialised nations due to the impact of AIDS on sexual behaviour, but STDs were not under control in

either developed or developing nations, he said.

Sex education was an effective method of combating STDs but in most parts of the world formal sexual education either did not exist, was inadequate or was provided too late in adolescence, the study said.

One notable exception was Sweden, the first country to introduce compulsory sex education at school. "As a result, gonorrhea and syphilis have almost disappeared there," it added.

By contrast, urban migration in developing countries had uprooted many young men and women, often lead-

ing to new sexual habits, including unprotected sexual intercourse with multiple partners.

As a result, the study said, between three and 15 per cent of women attending prenatal classes in sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia and the Caribbean were infected with gonorrhea. Untreated gonorrhea in pregnant women can cause blindness in newborns.

The study showed that the 250 million or more STDs occurring annually broke down into 120 million cases of trichomoniasis, 50 million cases of chlamydia, 30 million of genital warts, 25 million of

gonorrhea, 20 million of genital herpes, 3.5 million of syphilis, 2.5 million of hepatitis B virus and two million cases of chancroid.

Frank Judson, medical officer with the WHO's STD/AIDS programme, said hepatitis B was included in the list because 50 per cent of cases occurred through sexual transmission. "Two and half million new cases each year are attributable to sexual intercourse," he said.

In addition, an estimated one million people were infected with the HIV virus which causes AIDS for which there is no cure.

Studies strengthen link between genetics and breast cancer

By Paul Recer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Two research groups reported that they have closed in on a gene that increases susceptibility to breast cancer in some families.

Mary-Claire King of the University of California, Berkeley, said that in a needle-in-a-haystack quest for a gene linked to the disease, her research group has narrowed the search to a specific chromosome.

"We're now at the point of knowing the handful of hay in which this needle lies, as opposed to having to search through the whole haystack," she said in an interview.

Meanwhile, a research team from the University of Utah Health Sciences Centre has found that proliferative breast disease, a condition

known to be connected to developing breast cancer, has been found to be inherited in some families.

"Based on this study, we believe the genetic susceptibility to breast cancer is more common than previously thought," said Dr. Mark H. Skolnick of the Utah group.

Both groups have been studying families with large numbers of breast cancer cases. The studies were published in the journal Science. Skolnick and King said their studies could lead eventually to tests enabling women with known cancer risks, based on their family histories, to be treated even before the smallest of tumors have formed.

"The long-term goal of this kind of work is to try to develop diagnostic techniques that will allow the detection of aberrant cells in the breast at an extremely early

stage," said King. "Those cells could be removed and the woman go on with a normal life."

With such tests used widely, she said, "it would be possible that there would be no mortality from breast cancer."

Such clinical applications of the two studies, however, are many years away, King said.

In the California project, the scientist said her team studied more than 400 members of 23 families with a total of 116 cases of breast cancer. Breast cancer in those families, she said, tended to develop at an early age and often involved both breasts.

By analysing blood samples and then comparing genetic patterns, King said, the scientists found nine families in which susceptibility to the early onset of breast

cancer was linked to chromosome 17Q, one of the 46 chromosomes found in human cells.

Now, she said, the researchers are attempting to find the specific breast cancer gene within that chromosome.

King said that even when the gene is found, it will not be the final story in inherited breast cancer risk. She said that a combination of genes is involved in developing the disease and that still other genes may permit the cancer to grow and proliferate.

Furthermore, the scientist said, most breast cancers may have no inherited genetic component.

"People need to understand that having a mother with breast cancer does not mean it runs in the family," she said. Families such as those studied, where early breast cancer occurs often,

are "really, really rare," said King. "Less than five per cent of breast cancer patients are in such families."

Skolnick said his researchers studied 103 women from 20 families in which there were at least two close blood relatives with breast cancer. The studies included mammography and the removal of cells for laboratory and genetic analysis. Control studies were done on 31 women who did not come from breast cancer-prone families.

Thirty-five per cent of the women in families where breast cancer was common had laboratory evidence of proliferative breast disease, or PBD, Skolnick said.

Among women in the control study, only 13 per cent had PBD.

The study demonstrates, he said, that there is an inherited component in developing

PBD.

Skolnick said the study also suggests that the inherited risk for breast cancer, thought previously to be a factor primarily in families in which cases develop in young women of childbearing age and in women who develop cancer in both breasts, may also be a factor in families where the cancer develops only in older women.

"Our study shows that there is a significant genetic component for unilateral (single breast) post menopausal breast cancer as well," he said. For this reason, Skolnick said that the inherited risk of breast cancer may be more common than previously believed. It will take more studies to prove this, however.

Science, which published the studies, is the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Trying to come to terms with the burnout syndrome

By Catharina Aanderud

BURNOUT, from the English, is one of the latest buzzwords in German. The symptoms — a decline in workload capacity and productivity, bouts of depression and more frequent illness — transcend language barriers.

They are preoccupying sociologists and, to an increasing degree, management. The burnout syndrome has now been identified in the health service, but few if any professions seem to be spared.

Hamburg University Psychologist Matthias Burisch has investigated the phenomenon for seven years. It was brought to his attention by businessmen.

In 1983 he was approached by the personnel manager of Otto-Versand, a Hamburg mail-order firm, about problems the company was having with middle-aged middle management staff who had worked hard but, in all probability, peaked in their careers.

Burisch decided it was time to take a closer look at the subject. His findings have now been published in book form, entitled Das Burnout-Syndrom.

The syndrome is shown to be a gradual process. All of us, he says, are familiar with and will have been through its initial phases.

Freudenberger, who coined the term, originally felt it only affected people working in what might be termed the helping professions.

In the 1970s he observed how honorary staff of alternative charitable organisations were transformed in next to no time into depressive cynics who dealt with their clients in an increasingly off-putting and couldn't-care-less manner.

Burnout syndrome has since been diagnosed in roughly 30 professions.

"Not just nurses, social workers and teachers can burn out," Burisch says. "So can air hostesses, control tower staff, police officers, lawyers and, in particular, politicians and company ex-

ecutives."

They all start as keen as mustard to do a good job that frequently becomes the centre of their lives. But this initial commitment is hit hard by overwork or disappointed expectations, with the effect that is only to be expected on productivity.

In a state of having inwardly served notice to quit they then put in as little work as possible to do no more than is necessary.

What then follows includes psychosomatic symptoms such as insomnia, tension, high blood pressure, often accompanied by high alcohol, coffee and cigarette consumption.

"Finally," he says, "there is a state of emotional, social

and intellectual impoverishment that culminates in a feeling of senselessness, inner void and total despair."

Burisch attributes the burnout syndrome to failure to reach a position or status of power — and failure to come to terms with the fact.

Promotion may be ruled out by the present job-holder having years to go. An untenable situation may arise from which there is no escape.

The victim might, for instance, be a nurse who has reached the end of her tether but feels duty bound not to leave her patients in the lurch.

So a workaholic is a potential burnout case. Burisch's antidote is his 2L theory. "We have to be able to stand

on two legs," he says. "Leistung (achievement), or career performance) and Liebe (love)."

"What is it that recharges your batteries? Not just achievement, success and recognition. There are also love, sympathy and kindness."

A reliable network of social relationships has an anti-burnout effect, Burisch says. He also lists three preconditions that help to prevent burnout at work.

The first is an "optimum degree of clarity as to one's target." The second is that resources must be genuinely available. The third is feedback.

By resources he means conditions in which what is

expected of someone is feasible.

"Young managers who are expected to sweep with a new broom but are then told there must be no changes, or project staff with no powers of decision" are classic burnout prospects.

Feedback is particularly important, and particularly lacking, in the helping professions. "It often only happens when something has gone wrong, so no news is good news."

Burisch has no universally applicable advice to burnout victims, but the first step he advises is to stand back and take stock.

"Let the victim find someone to ask him the right questions and not to let him

stay stuck in the mud, someone to join him in finding out just what is going on."

Do it soon enough, Burisch says, and you will have grasped the situation after two hours of counselling. But if you are already suffering from physical symptoms then have no fear of taking professional advice.

Where burnout is due to poor work routines or to friction within a team, organisational changes can remedy matters.

Companies such as Otto-Versand, Siemens, Hoechst, Nixdorf and Audi have realised how important organisational structures are. They all now offer information courses to forestall burnout — Stuttgarter Nachrichten.

Major climbed off a roller coaster, but the fun has yet to come

By David Storey
Reuter

LONDON — It was the year Britain climbed off the roller coaster of the Thatcher era, one of the most radical upheavals in social and political life this century, and opted for a gentler ride under John Major.

In 1990, Britain's biggest sensation was the dispatch of Margaret Thatcher, tenacious survivor of a decade of struggle as prime minister, by Conservative Party colleagues. They had grown weary of her bellowing and increasingly sceptical of her ideology.

For 1991, Major brings a fresh new face — and hope to a country gripped again by the kind of economic sickness many believed Thatcher's bitter medicine of the 1980s had cured for good.

Major, at 47 the youngest prime minister for nearly a century, was chosen by the ruling conservatives in November as the man most likely to carry on the traditions of Thatcherism but with less confrontation and more consultation.

But from his opening appearance in parliament, when he

declared "I am my own man," he has quickly established his own style, reviving the more caring, tolerant and pro-European approach of pre-Thatcher British conservatism.

As he prepared for a general election, which might be called during 1991, he made clear the main policies would not change.

These include reliance on market forces and individual initiative, privatisation of state concerns and maintaining tight monetary policies to control inflation.

Major made clear Britain's tough line on the Gulf crisis would continue. He planned to visit the country's troops stationed in Saudi Arabia in early January and said they would certainly be used if Iraq did not pull out of Kuwait.

But the new prime minister quickly abandoned the anti-socialist line of Thatcher, who early in her 11-year rule asked hypothetically: "Whoever won a battle under the banner 'I stand for consensus'?"

Major was quick to abandon the abrasive tone in which she rejected further integration within the European Community.

He laid the ground for a partnership with other EC states at a community summit in Rome on Dec. 14, when he impressed his older and more hardened colleagues with a mixture of frankness, confidence and enthusiasm.

"We see it in our national self-interest to help build and shape the European Community and that's what we hope to do,"

he told them — but Britain would not be diverted from its step-by-step approach to closer monetary and economic unity.

One British official said Major underlined the difference between himself and Thatcher, 18 years his senior, by stressing that "most people of his generation and younger in Britain take a very positive view of the com-

munity."

Major, who made his own way from humble origins as the son of a trapeze artist, is in some ways an embodiment of the "new man" of Thatcherism.

Her policy, which included big tax cuts and de-regulating financial and other business, was to break class moulds, opening the way into trade, business or politics for those with guts and en-

terprise.

It helped create John Major, but it also helped create the get-rich-quick "yuppie" philosophy that undermined long-established social systems.

When he took over on Nov. 28, Major said it was his aim to build "a society in which what people fulfil will depend on their talent, their application and

their good fortune."

The 1990s, he said, would be "a decade of the most remarkable opportunities."

But his language and that of his ministers indicated that in doing this he would respect the need to help those who had fallen through the cracks of Thatcher's social revolution.

He quickly announced initiatives in some key areas — to help the thousands of homeless who sleep on city streets and those infected with AIDS through National Health Service blood transfusions.

In 1991 the poll tax or community charge, which provoked mass rioting when it was imposed in 1990 to finance local government, will undergo a fundamental review. Anger at the tax was a key factor in the wave of popular discontent that eventually ousted Thatcher.

Health Secretary William Waldegrave reflected the new thinking in a speech repudiating the old cost-efficiency — all approach to the National Health Service (NHS).

"I think we have overdone the language of commerce in relation to the NHS... we have alarmed quite a lot of people

who think we do not know the difference between a hospital and a supermarket," he said.

But despite the caring face, Major, the former chancellor of the exchequer (finance minister), knows that through 1991 at least, to squeeze out high inflation he will have to maintain the tight policies that have already caused great social pain.

The remedy involves interest rates of 14 per cent, which caused a rash of bankruptcies and a record jump in unemployment in November, when 57,600 people were put out of work, bringing the total to 1.76 million — 6.2 per cent of the work force.

Major predicts inflation will fall from just under 10 per cent to around 5.5 by the end of 1991, and the economy will begin to pick up towards the middle of the year after the current slump.

The pace of the economic recovery will influence the prime minister's choice of when to hold a general election which he must call by mid-1992.



Diplomacy

(Continued from page 1)

Secretary of State James Baker that a partial withdrawal is not a substitute for a total withdrawal in a sense precluding the relevance even of a partial withdrawal.

However, if a process of withdrawal is to take place partial and total in the sense of withdrawal to the borders agreed between Kuwait and Iraq — as you know the territorial issue is not only common to Kuwait and Iraq but to most of the Gulf states both at land and at sea — and to a lasting peace agreement or even a conflict free zone in the Gulf then discussion has to succeed the beginning of the process of withdrawal.

Q: Do you think that Mr. Saddam Hussein is ready for a partial withdrawal or gradual withdrawal if President Bush guarantees no attack on Baghdad or no attack on Iraq?

A: This has been in Iraqi statements very clearly made from, I would say, day 2, the 3rd of August and our fear is that when speaking of attack against Baghdad we are not talking of the implementation of the U.N. resolutions aimed at the restoration of Kuwait; we are talking the language of reprisal and once reprisal starts and generalised conflict ensues there is no way of determining what the strategic objectives of the belligerents could be.

Q: Do you think Mr. Baker is now afraid of partial withdrawal, sudden partial withdrawal, by President Saddam Hussein and what kind of reaction would be from the Arabs if Iraq announces unilaterally partial withdrawal from Kuwait?

A: I think that a unilateral initiative, whether on the development of a nuclear programme to make clear effectively that there is no official intention to develop a nuclear programme, whether on the subject of international water ways, I am talking hypothetically, internationalising the water ways would reduce the tension over the territorial issues between many of the Gulf countries in the continental shelf, whether over the question of reparations and reparations is far less costly than war all of these and many other suggestions have been made. But if we take the question of unilateral initiative, in the case of the hostages, though the popular reaction was positive in many countries of the world, the

official American reaction was 'we do not congratulate him for something he should have done in the first place' so if the reaction to a partial withdrawal officially in the U.S. is going to be 'we will not congratulate him for something that he should have done in the first place' something that should lead to a total withdrawal then clearly the mind-set will not have been changed but as far as the Arab World is concerned I think the beginning of a process of withdrawal can only be interpreted as a responsible gesture leading to a political settlement.

Q: What kind of influence or aftermath no the Arabs do you speculate if war broke out?

A: I believe that the bitterness of the wounds that have already been opened since the 2nd of August between Arabs and potentially between Muslims would be very difficult to contain in the aftermath of a war, particularly a war involving such a heavy international presence on Arab soil. The casualties will be in their tens possibly hundreds of thousands. As has been estimated 80 per cent of casualties in war would be of course be civilian casualties. The ecological disaster, the bitterness and the anxiety resulting from economic disruption and we are preparing in this country for example for a minimum, according to the U.N. system, of one million evacuees. All of this cannot be contained in the future by police action, when people are totally militarised, have nothing to hope for, one can only expect a period of violence and instability.

Q: And if the war break out how you will then reply?

A: Jordan will defend its sovereignty against all corners.

Q: So you will take a neutral position?

A: As I said Jordan would have to defend its sovereignty against all corners. Jordan is not a passive for military aggression.

Q: President Saddam Hussein has repeatedly stated that if the U.S. attacked Iraq or Kuwait, Iraq will retaliate to Israel. Do you think Mr. Saddam Hussein really try to do that?

A: It is a very alarming reality, I repeat, a reality that we have been warning against. The possibility of a generalised conflict since the 2nd of August. And only since such a statement is made does the international community begin to realise the gravity of the situation.

So, as I have said from the very

beginning that this country has stated and restated, I think on the question of linkage between the Iraqi-Kuwaiti conflict and annexation and the case of Palestine has resulted in so much effort on the part of the international community to give lip service to the Palestinian question without recognising it fully on its own merit. And I would have hoped effectively, that, and still hope that this issue can be given a greater attention. However we have also warned that in the event of war when you foreclose all options apart from total unilateral non-negotiable withdrawal, effectively total capitulation.

Q: But the Japanese are now very afraid of the Jordanian involvement if war breaks out between Israel and Iraq.

A: Well, as I said, clearly we didn't choose our neighbours.

Q: And could you please explain the present relations of Jordan with Saudi Arabia and with the U.S.?

A: I think that there is continuing dialogue clearly with the U.S. It has been simplistically put, are you are with us or against us? We are not against the U.S. We share many of the same values in our search for democracy and social justice but at the same time there is clearly a difference of opinion and approach.

We have not joined the multinational force nor do we believe that the war option is the way in which occupation and annexation of Kuwait is to be resolved. We believe that there is the possibility if the U.S. will consider more fully a political settlement, as Edward Heath put it the other day I think, to continue to say appeasement as though talking of a political settlement is unacceptable because it is appeasement makes us feel uncomfortable. Here in the Arab-Israeli conflict issue it is that the international community asked us to enter into a negotiation process and does not see that an appeasement in the case of Israel and I think again as Mr. Heath put it there is difference between appeasement and common sense. So given the cost of war we are appealing for humanitarian common sense and we think the time is still opportune. But we have to wait and see as I said what happens after the 15th of January.

Q: And how about the relation with Saudi Arabia?

A: The Jordanian ambassador returning recently to Riyadh?

A: Yes. It is abnormal that Jordan

and Saudi Arabia should not enjoy cordial good relations.

Q: And how could you evaluate the recent U.N. Security Council resolution on the Palestinian issue?

A: Well, I mean if you want the legal evaluation I will just read to you from this paper the reference to the international conference was relegated to a statement by the president. It was not made in the body of the resolution. Of course relegating the reference to the international conference to a statement by the president gives the impression in this part of the world that it is a symbolic reference to the international conference. So in a sense this is a middle ground between the American wish not to reward Saddam by a linkage and the original non-aligned request for reference to a peace conference.

That is one observation. My second observation would be that it is interesting to see the reference to 242 and 338 but also to notice the absence of any reference to resolutions 462 and 478 on settlements and on Jerusalem. I still think however that it is a step in the right direction that... would contribute to a process.

Q: To read an Iraqi news agency report that Iraq has welcomed the resignation of Mr. Shevardnadze and welcomes if Mr. Primakov succeeds as foreign minister of the Soviet Union and it would be good for the Arabs.

A: I think that is an Iraqi statement on bilateral relations with the Soviet Union.

Q: Roughly do you explain the Jordanian situation, I mean economic problems in Jordan?

A: Economically I would be happy to give you a paper in terms of Japanese assistance to date in particular but I would also like to refer you to the fact that we are holding a small round-table discussion on the 5th of January.

Q: And today you are satisfied with the Japanese efforts to help Jordan economy?

A: I am impressed by the fact that the first to respond was in fact the Japanese government to the requirements of Jordan as stated by U.N. special representative John Riepert. However it was very clear to the Japanese governments and the EC government participating in the meeting of the 17th of November that the shortfall between \$1.4 billion pledged to Jordan in 1990 and approximately \$200 million received is still very alarming.

LETTERS

To the Editor:

IN reference to the article entitled "Hijab — a passport to liberty" published in the Jordan Times on Dec. 17, I would like to publish the following comment:

Although I was intrigued by the title of the article "Hijab — a passport to liberty," I was somewhat misled by the title and confused by its message.

I also found it to contain various forms of contradictions and perhaps false excuses, not on the part of its writer as much as on the part of those who took part in expressing their views. This, in my view, has resulted mainly from ignorance of Islam and attachment to various forms of interpretations that are based on man-made theories and convictions.

In doing so, the writer of the article has committed herself to conveying false interpretations and failed to compare the results of her "research" to the essence of Islam. And I insist on specifying the "essence of Islam" simply because all those who turned overnight into speakers on or about Islam have always referred to it through individual practices, personal opinions or isolated incidents rather than dealing with it as a unique and sacred way of life. In other terms, dealing with the religion at face value and not in an in-depth analysis of the reasons and motives and even perhaps the rewards of Islam.

Allow me first to explain in very few words the meaning of Islam and therefore its essence.

Islam as the word means is the total submission to God and subsequently to His will. This total submission results from the absolute conviction (iman) of His absolute power and our absolute weakness. Our pride in human genius, power and ability to solve problems and to create methods of advancement has blinded us and limited our abilities to realise our true weaknesses.

However, belief in and submission to God is not an issue that we may take lightly or even be subjected to whims and moods. God's will was that we should obey Him and that for those of us who don't, punishment was waiting. Once we have established belief in God, we cannot create excuses for not obeying Him, simply because we humans are daily subjected (willingly or otherwise) to different forms of obedience. We obey the government for fear of imprisonment, we obey traffic laws for fear of a ticket, we obey our parents for fear of flogging or "grounding" or stopping our allowances, we obey our teachers for fear of low grades, we obey our employers for fear of sacking, we even obey the whims of our boy/girl friends for fear of a heart-break. So why in God's name can't we obey our creator for fear of eternal hell?

This whole obedience exercise has shown only one thing, that we are willing to accept something hard in order to reap something better. The same thing applies to our relationship with God. On the other hand, one has to bear in mind that whatever we do towards God is not really done for Him but rather for us, because it is us who will reap the benefits and that whatever we do (right or wrong) will not affect God anymore than removing a drop of water from the ocean would affect it.

Hijab — a lesson in obedience

Hence, obedience should not be applied with double standards. Furthermore, total submission and obedience work both ways in Islam. Obedience can be pleasant as is the case with fulfilling the right to marry. Obedience is obedience whether pleasant or not and a human's commitment to man's creator's orders is an indicator of the level of his belief and conviction.

In other words, those women who have said they believed in God but were not quite ready yet to implement His wishes or orders are not true believers as they claim. Claims of not being convinced of covering up are only a load of baloney, to use American metaphor. And even if one is to believe that they needed to be convinced, the question is what have they done towards gaining that conviction, besides coming up with excuses?

We've also read the views of a criminologist and a psychiatrist on the "back to Islam" trend. Both views were made through Western man-made perspectives. It surely does sound like true belief and total obedience are signs of mental illness or criminal trends that are the subject of analysis by both teachings.

It is such methods that gave Islam a bad image. The role of the media in this regard has affected Islam adversely. In fact several people I know are more afraid of a Muslim "fundamentalist" than they would be of Rabbi Kahane. To many, the sight of extreme Jewish zealots would only arouse political sentiments. Unfortunately, the sight of a bearded Muslim is often related to backwardness or other adjectives of common use.

Let us be sensible and realistic; seeking to dig out individuals who use the "image" of Islam to fulfill personal needs can surely be an attempt to discredit Islam just as much as those women have discredited themselves. It is a well established fact that those who adopt a different personality to reach a socially accepted status are not honest with themselves nor with their society, that is not to say that they are fraudulent or even sick.

However, one look at our society reveals a horrifying picture. Western influence has swept over much of our lifestyles and beliefs not only in contradiction of our religion but also of valuable social values. Hence the case was made by all semi-naked women that they have the right to exhibit the major chunk of their bodies in accordance with personal freedoms and the control of their destinies, while some others put the "whole lot" for sale.

We must all remember that despite all the arguments, we are not really free after all. We are not free to evade life, nor are we free to evade death. However, we are free to choose our ways, something for which we are accountable at the end of the day.

We have the solutions right here in the "book." All it takes is conviction and obedience... the essence of Islam.

Hijab, although I hate to use the word because it means something totally different, a solution to many problems as long as it is used with conviction and not as part of charade.

It is another lesson of obedience. It is another, but not the only passport to "eternal" freedom.

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Jordan Times

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

كسوة من الحيا

Arsenal closes gap on Liverpool

LONDON (R) — Arsenal continued to snap at Liverpool's heels in the English first division title race with a stylish 3-0 home win over Derby Wednesday.

The result took the Gunners, docked two points last month, to within four points of leaders Liverpool, who were held to a 1-1 draw at Queen's Park Rangers.

Some of the most entertaining fare of the Boxing Day programme was served up at Leeds where the home team beat high-flying Chelsea 4-1. The victory stretched Leeds' unbeaten run to 10 matches and carried them to

fourth place in the table.

Leeds gained the upper hand in the 40th minute when Mel Sterland opened the scoring.

A double by Lee Chapman and a late goal from Michael Whitlow sent Chelsea tumbling to their defeat in six league games.

Kerry Dixon netted Chelsea's only goal in the 65th minute.

The three clubs at the foot of the table all had reason to celebrate.

Bottom-placed Sheffield United, who went 16 league matches without a victory, beat Luton 1-0 for their second successive

victory. Brian Deane scored United's goal in the 71st minute.

Rangers' 1-1 draw against Liverpool — Mark Falco cancelled out John Barnes' 49th minute strike for Liverpool — was an unexpected bonus for a team in the doldrums for several weeks.

Coventry enjoyed their first league success since the arrival of player-manager Terry Butcher six weeks ago when they beat Tottenham 2-0 at home. Their marksmen were Kevin Gallacher and Mike Gynn.

Alan Smith scored twice in

Arsenal's demolition of Derby, taking his tally to nine in eight games.

Smith delicately headed home Anders Limpar's precise cross after only four minutes and struck again 13 minutes from the end after a huge clearance by Arsenal keeper David Seaman had caught the Derby defence napping.

Paul Merson scored Arsenal's second in the 26th minute with an angled shot that the referee ruled had crossed the line before being backed away by defender Paul Williams.

Washington panel delays decision on Barnes' appeal

NEW YORK (R) — A U.S. panel has delayed its decision on American shot putter Randy Barnes' appeal of a two-year doping suspension until it receives more information, a panel member said Wednesday.

"We decided we needed more information before we could make a decision, but under TAC (The Athletics Congress) Confidentiality rules 1 cannot tell you what that information is," panel member Cliff Wiley told Reuters in a telephone interview.

The three-member panel of the TAC Drug Control Review Board met Saturday in Washington to hear Barnes' appeal. Its members had been unavailable for comment until Wednesday.

Barnes, the world record holder in the shot put, and fellow American Butch Reynolds, the 400-metre world record holder, were suspended for two years by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) on Nov. 5 after testing positive for steroids at European meetings in August.

Both athletes have denied taking

steroids and are appealing the suspensions through TAC, the sport's U.S. governing body.

The review panels will determine whether the suspensions should be upheld or appealed to the IAAF, the sport's world governing body.

Wiley said he did not know when the Barnes panel would make its decision. "But it shouldn't be an unreasonable delay," he said.

Reynolds is scheduled to appear before a similar panel Jan. 4, Columbus, Ohio.

Meanwhile leading German athletes will be tested every fortnight next year, the German Athletic Association (DLV) said Sunday.

The DLV said in a statement all athletes likely to qualify for August's World Athletics Championships in Tokyo will face

dope tests every two weeks as well as random tests.

After a weekend meeting in Frankfurt DLV chiefs also said they would investigate German

media allegations that several top athletes, mostly East German, had taken performance-enhancing drugs.

12-nation Hopman Cup tennis tournament to begin

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Americans David Wheaton and Zina Garrison are the top seeds for the 12-nation Hopman Cup tennis tournament, which begins Thursday at the Burswood Superdome.

Wheaton, a semifinalist at the Grand Slam Cup, is a late replacement for compatriot Pete Sampras, who withdrew with a blistered foot.

The Americans are seeded ahead of defending champions Emilio and Arantxa Sanchez, the brother and sister combina-

tion from Spain.

The Swiss pair of Jakob Hasek and Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere is seeded third ahead of the Soviet Union, Australia and Yugoslavia.

The Americans will face the winner of the first round match between Germany and Czechoslovakia in the last eight.

The Australian combination of former Wimbledon champion Pat Cash and Liz Smylie plays

Jeremy Bates and Sarah Loosemore of Britain in the tournament opener Thursday.

Marseille has healthy lead despite upheavals

By Reuters

DESPITE all the upheavals taking place in Marseille, the French soccer champions went into the winter break with a four-point first division lead after a creditable 0-0 draw at Caen at the weekend.

Technical director Franz Beckenbauer, sitting on the trainer's bench for the last time, permitted himself a satisfied smile.

Marseille's rivals for the title, Auxerre and Monaco, both lost their last matches before the three-week break.

Belgian coach Raymond Goethals, who will take over the day-to-day running of the team under Beckenbauer in the new year, was also happy enough with the way things had turned out to announce ambitious plans to make Marseille the first French European champions.

"We can't just live on hopes," he said. "It's imperative that a French club at last achieves success in Europe. For that, two of us will not be too many."

Goethals, sacked by tradition-

al Marseille rivals Bordeaux earlier this season, said he would meet Beckenbauer and club President Bernard Tapie next week to define their respective roles.

In Italy, Lother Matthaeus, voted European footballer of the year Sunday, was quoted by Corriere dello Sport as saying Napoli captain Diego Maradona was still the best.

"Diego remains unique," he said. "I've nearly closed the gap between us — but not quite."

Others disagreed. German team coach Berti Vogts said: "He's a world class player and in the scope of his repertoire he's over-taking Maradona."

Inter manager Giovanni Trapattoni said of his star midfielder: "Matthaeus is the sort of player every team manager would love to have. I've seen him make prodigious progress since he came to Inter (two years ago). He's become a complete player from every point of view."

Last year's winner, Dutch striker Marco Van Basten, was

also full of praise for the 29-year-old Matthaeus.

"I hand over the title willingly because he deserves it," he said.

In the Netherlands, PSV Eindhoven put themselves three points clear of champions Ajax Amsterdam with a 2-0 victory over FC Twente Saturday.

PSV have 25 points from 15 games, but Ajax, not in action, have two matches in hand and have generally looked the more positive this season.

PSV, who have struggled with injuries, should be boosted after the winter break by the return of international midfielder Berry Van Aerle, out since August with a knee problem.

Meanwhile, Feyenoord Rotterdam, down in ninth place after losing 2-0 at Utrecht, are thinking of shedding four players, according to press reports.

Meanwhile, Spanish soccer officials ruled that suspended FC Barcelona striker Hristo Stoichkov could suit up Wednesday for a charity match to benefit six police officers who were killed

by a terrorist car bomb.

Spanish Soccer Federation officials waived the Bulgarian striker's six-month suspension for the exhibition match between Barcelona and second-division team Sabadell because of its charitable nature.

The match was to take place in Nova Cren Alta Stadium in Sabadell. The six policemen were on their way to provide security at the stadium, a site for the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, when the car bomb exploded next to their van.

The Dec. 8 blast injured two other police officers and six civilians.

Proceeds from the match were to go to the victims' families.

"The special circumstances surrounding the case are worth consideration," the federation's Competition and Discipline Committee said in its decision.

Barcelona is planning to appeal the suspension meted out to Stoichkov for intentionally clearing a referee during a Dec. 5 match with Real Madrid.

Dessie wins King George Chase for 4th time

KEMPTON PARK, England (R) — Desert Orchid, Britain's favourite racehorse, swept into the history books on a tide of emotion when he won the Grade One King George VI Chase for a record fourth successive year Wednesday.

The powerful 11-year-old grey, the 9-4 favourite, was cheered home by an army of fans who have backed him throughout an outstanding career.

Although Dessie had made a poor start to the season with two defeats in two races, he jumped superbly around his favourite Kempton Park course under jockey Richard Dunwoody.

After lying a relaxed second for most of the three-mile (4.8 kilometre) chase, Desert Orchid seized the initiative when pace setter Sabon Du Loir crumpled on landing six fences from home.

Toby Tobias continued to

press but Desert Orchid sealed victory with a terrific leap at the third from last and pulled away to win by 12 lengths.

Toby Tobias finished second with French raider The Fellow a further five lengths back in third.

Celtic Shot, the second favourite, was pulled up after a whole catalogue of errors.

Winning trainer David Elsworth said: "I am pleased for

everyone connected with him but most of all for the horse.

"He did it the hard way — it was a dire struggle out there and he was quite simply the best horse on the day."

Dessie, who has won almost all Britain's major jump races including the Cheltenham Gold Cup, became the oldest horse to win the King George since Southern Hero took it at its first running in 1977.

British yacht leads Sydney-to-Hobart race

SYDNEY (R) — A stiff southeasterly breeze sent British maxi Rothmans charging out of Sydney Heads to lead a 105-strong fleet in the 46th Sydney-to-Hobart Yacht Race Wednesday.

While many yachts struggled to set spinnakers in their run out of the harbour, line honours favourite Rothmans opted to remain under headsail and set a reaching course to sea.

The tactics for the 15 million dollar (\$11 million) yacht paid handsome dividends for British

skipper Lawrence Smith, giving him a one minute and 30 second lead on Australian maxi Condor at the first seaward mark.

Third was the 10-year-old aluminium Australian maxi Ragamuffin a further 90 seconds behind Condor.

Australian 20 metre pocket maxi Bobsled, which has been tipped as a contender for line honours in the 630 nautical mile race, played a cat and mouse game with Rothmans on the run to the head. But it was unable to

either catch the bigger British yacht or spoil its wind despite setting a spinnaker soon after the start.

Once through the heads Bobsled, which has been designed to surf very fast when running with the wind, dropped back quickly as it ploughed headlong into the wind and a two metre southerly swell.

The smallest yacht in the race, nine metre Ironstein, was demasted as it passed through the

heads.

The 12 metre Rattle and Hum, skippered by Japan's Nobuhiko Kishimoto, and 16.8 metre sloop Australian Maid were involved in a collision.

Both yachts continued in the race.

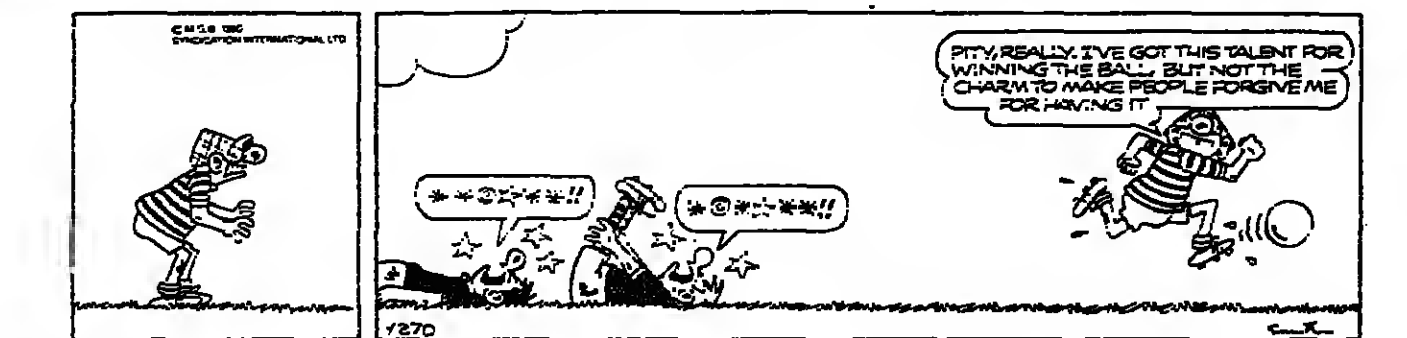
The 15 to 20 knot southeasterly has virtually ruined any chance of the race record being broken.

American maxi Kialoa set the race best of two days 14 hours 36 minutes 56 seconds in 1975.

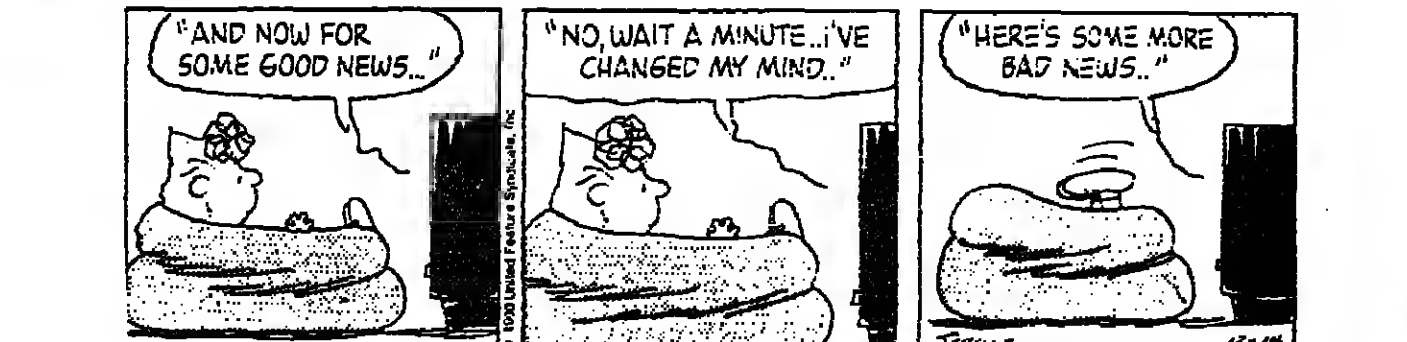
Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY DECEMBER 27, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You are more practical than usual, especially after the past several days, that have had all kinds of hasty and impulsive urges connected with them. Moon time Sun, Uranus and Neptune brings quick resolve today.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You have a very good and modern-thinking friend who will help you to get some personal ambition if you let him know just what you have in mind.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Some new idea comes into your head how you can present a new plan to an executive or official that can bring you more worldly success.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You now find that a mentally brilliant friend has an idea that will give you more data that you want in order to extend your interest in things.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is the moment for you to show that you are eager to attend to any public obligations that are yours whether with government or companies.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is your moment to show you are very eager to get along better with an associate by listening to the new viewpoints that are expressed.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A lot of activity can be done by

you today if you make a point to carry through with the agreements made by others require you to be very exact.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Whatever you would like to do that does overestimate amusing others or doing the creative skills you do the best are very good for you now.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Your own family is willing to listen to some plan you have in mind that can add to your present ability to have an order about you.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Going to some place of entertainment with a usual companion makes it possible for you to discuss and work out plans to have more success.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Take some time out to go over some proportion of interest to you and your family with one who is close to you and get ideas to put it in motion.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is your time to show you are the one who does understand what others are trying to put across for your mind is active now.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A strange new idea how to improve the financial side of your affairs comes to you now so be on the lookout and put in motion for your benefit.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY DECEMBER 28, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Apply yourself to the business at hand today and be very materially minded as to what you are going to do about money and possession decisions that are in need of immediate answers. Evening good for social activity.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Interesting and very electric types of friends bring you a big chance to have far more happiness and they introduce you to new contracts.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is your time to make sure that you do whatever is required by one of considerable influence who quietly show you how to get ahead fast.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can be with friends and thoroughly enjoy their company especially if you have recently met them and they have different ideas from your own.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You find that you have a new plan by which you can attend to your bookkeeping or are able to put in active motion promises you made.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Your associates have so many brilliant suggestions for your joint progress that you would be wise to contact as many as possible and get some views.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is your day to make sure you tackle whatever tasks face you

from an entirely new angle if you want them done well and brilliantly.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can have one of your happiest of days and be sure to leave some free time for some unexpected invitation or good time or you will miss out.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are able to show your one who thinks of your family and if you do something to please them they don't expect happiness comes.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Brilliant and interesting friends can bring you out of that slump you have and make you see the lighter side of things in daily routines.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You have some significant gains towards gaining the good will of a cooperative official who can help you have more of this world's goods.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You are able to do pretty much what you please now that you like but you can also gain a whole new perspective where you are headed to.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You have much activity in behind the scenes pursuits and you can see how you can work angles of a confidential nature in the future and gain much.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNIAH HIRSCH

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DON'T DOUBLE TOMMY

North-South vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH
♠ 10 8 4
♥ 7 2
♦ A 6 4 3 2
♣ A 7 3

WEST
♠ Q J 9 5
♥ J 10 4
♦ 10 7 3
♣ Q 8 5

EAST
♠ K Q 9 8
♥ K Q J 6
♦ K Q J 6
♣ J 10 9 2

SOUTH
♠ A K 6 3 2
♥ A 6 5 3
♦ 9
♣ K 6 4

The bidding:
East 1 ♣ South 1 ♠ West 2 ♠ North 2 ♠
Pass 3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠
Pass Pass DBL Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♣

Club members had, over the years, learned that a trump stack was not grounds enough to double a Trump Coup Tommy contract. Indeed, it was only a bad trump break that brought out the best in Tommy—the rest of the time "mediocre" flattered his playing ability.

Once in a while, however, a stranger would wander into the bridge club, watch Tommy butcher a few easy hands, then double him on the strength of what seemed like a couple of trump tricks. That was the case on this hand when West,

peripatetic Pakistani on a visit to Tommy's club, thought that partner's opening bid combined with his four trumps headed by the queen-jack would provide ample ammunition to blow Tommy's contract out of the water.

West dutifully led partner's suit, and even Tommy realized that West was not doubling on high cards, but on trump tricks. Forewarned, Tommy did not make the error of cashing even one round of trumps.

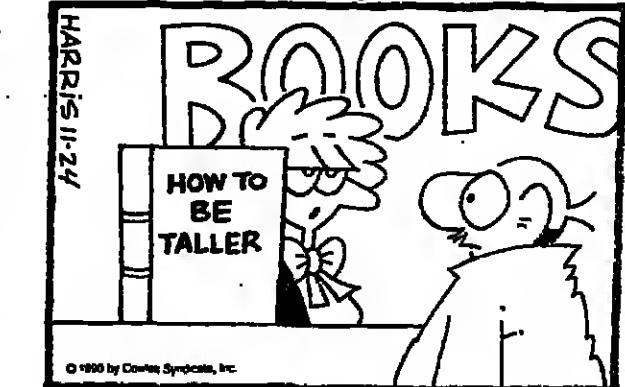
Instead, he allowed the Jack of hearts to win the first trick and captured the continuation with the ace.

Next came a diamond to the ace and a diamond ruff, a heart trumped with the four of spades and another diamond ruff.

After cashing the king and ace of clubs, declared led the table's last diamond, hoping that West would hold the last diamond and that it could be ruffed low. Unfortunately, East followed to the diamond and Tommy had to switch to Plan B.

Tommy ruffed the diamond with the king of trumps as West discarded the queen of clubs, then led the remaining heart. That put an end to the defense. West delayed matters momentarily by ruffing with the Jack of spades, but then was forced to lead away from the trump queen into declarer's combined A 10 tenace. Tommy scored two trumps, four ruffs and four winners in the side suits—10 tricks in all.

THE BETTER HALF.



JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YEVAH

EUJIC

SEELAW

VISWEL

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: MORE "O O O O" THAN "O O O O"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: FINAL RAPID WOBBLE INHALE

Answer: Where a businessman who's always "on the level" shouldn't have to go—DOWNHILL.

THE Daily Crossword

by Diane C. Baldwin



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1 Across: 1. Farmer's time 2. Sarnian city 3. Fullback 4. Joan of — 5. Eureka! 6. Ski lift 7. Barber's need 8. Porcine 9. Legends 10. Sphere leader 11. Assistant 12. Blast with noise 13. "I want for Christmas..." 14. Epic tale 15. Truck 16. Flight back 17. Fill up 18. Prilly fruit 19. Spooky 20. M. City 21. Gambling spot 22. Glad 23. Scans further 24. Barnyard 25. Squeal 26. Lizard 27. Lizard 28. Lizard 29. Lizard 30. Lizard 31. Lizard 32. Lizard 33. Lizard 34. Lizard 35. Lizard 36. Lizard 37. Lizard 38. Lizard 39. Lizard 40. Lizard 41. Lizard 42. Lizard 43. Lizard 44. Lizard 45. Lizard 46. Lizard 47. Lizard 48. Lizard

Soviet Union heads for market or bust with new crisis plan

MOSCOW (R) — President Mikhail Gorbachev unveiled a do-or-die programme Tuesday for pulling the Soviet Union out of a deepening crisis and introducing a market economy.

The programme, drawn up by Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, was presented at a meeting between Kremlin and republican leaders and published by the official Soviet news agency TASS. It is due to be submitted to parliament within a week.

It calls for an authoritarian approach to introducing market-oriented reforms which could run into stiff opposition from republics demanding independence or greater autonomy.

Following are the main economic provisions, mostly to be implemented over the coming year with 31 new laws, eight presiden-

tial decrees and 10 agreements with republics:

— Stabilise the situation by declaring a moratorium on political strikes until the end of 1991 and set up a coordination committee with the republics to ensure that the programme is carried out.

— Complete transition to free market prices by Oct. 1, 1992. An income indexation law to be introduced.

— Work out privatisation plans in the second quarter of 1991. Loss-making firms to be privatised or have their managements sacked.

— End the monopoly of state foreign trade organisations this year and continue foreign trade decentralisation.

— Develop foreign exchange trading to help make the rouble

convertible. Introduce anti-inflation policies. Cut imports by 10 to 15 per cent by the end of 1991.

— Attract foreign investment with creation of free economic zones and legislation easing repatriation of profits.

— Introduce austerity budget measures for the second half of this year with a moratorium on new investment programmes.

— Suspend republican and local decisions that contradict Soviet laws. Withdraw subsidies from republics that refuse to cooperate in a new union treaty holding the Soviet Union together or fail to contribute to the central government budget.

— Grant the Soviet central bank greater powers over the banking system with a tougher stance on credits to rebellious

republics.

— Make authorities and enterprises responsible for meeting food supply obligations in 1991. Introduce centralised control of grain and other basic foodstuffs.

— Bring in extra workers and the army to help with harvesting and work in the food processing industry.

— Increase the proportion of food and other goods sold through private channels.

— Halt the decline in energy, transport and communications with the introduction of a "special regime" for 1991-1992.

— Reduce defence spending and convert military facilities to meet the needs of the civilian economy.

— Develop stock and commodities exchanges with Soviet and foreign participation.

Pentagon defers contractors' debts to avert bankruptcies

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Defence Department said Tuesday it granted its two biggest contractors two extra years to repay a \$1.3 billion debt to avoid the possibility of them filing for bankruptcy during the Gulf war.

Eleanor Spector, director of defence procurement at the Pentagon, said McDonnell Douglas and General Dynamics were given the extra time to pay the \$1.34 billion debt on a failed contract for a navy jet.

The debt represented overpayments made before development of the radar-evading Stealth A-12 attack plane was cancelled by Defence Secretary Dick Cheney on Jan. 7.

"We possibly would have precipitated chapter 11 for one or both of the companies had we insisted on that repayment," Spector told a House armed ser-

vices subcommittee. Chapter 11 of the U.S. bankruptcy law protects companies from creditors while a judge tries to help them reorganise.

"This was in the middle of Desert Storm and we were moving equipment from them," Spector said. "They are our two largest contractors and conceivably they would not have performed in chapter 11."

The decision to delay such a huge debt payment for defence contractors is unprecedented, according to chairman Nicholas Mavroules, a Democrat, who called the special subcommittee hearing to investigate the delay.

McDonnell Douglas is the top U.S. defence firm with \$8.2 billion in contracts last year and makes the F-15 fighter planes and Apache helicopters used in the Gulf war.

Simson goes into liquidation

BERLIN (R) — Simson, the 90-year-old company that made former communist East Germany's only moped went into liquidation leaving its remaining 3,300 staff unemployed. "The Simson name will no longer exist," said Guenther Arnold, Simson Fahrzeug GMBH's deputy works council chairman. Simson's liquidation by the Treuhandschaft privatisation agency fol-

lowed decisions to close much of the east's vehicle manufacturing. The loss-making Wartburg and Trabant car plants will shut this month. Arnold said the factory, which saw its markets swamped by Western competitors with unification last year, had practically ceased production last month. The Treuhandschaft was looking for investors to use the failed company's plant, Arnold added.

Brazil, banks fix deal

BRASILIA (AP) — The government has reached an agreement with private creditor banks for payment of \$8.5 billion in arrears on its foreign debt.

Brazil will pay \$2 billion this year and convert the balance into 10-year bonds. Acting Economy Minister Joao Maia has said.

"This is a significant step towards a definitive solution to the debt," he said.

Maia said Brazil will pay \$1 billion immediately and another \$1 billion in monthly instalments through December.

The bonds will have a three-year grace period and fixed interest rates, Maia said. Creditors can choose from a "menu" of options for interest payments.

Maia called the agreement on fixed interest rates "an unprecedented innovation."

"After eight months of negotiations, we view these terms with optimism and hope," he said. "It respects the availability of our international resources and the targets of fiscal austerity."

Brazil's currency reserves are estimated at around \$9 billion.

Egypt shores - up 4 state-owned banks with \$600m cash injection

CAIRO (R) — Egypt has injected hundreds of millions of dollars into its four major public sector banks to help them face a wave of competition hitting the country's cosseted financial markets.

Mahmoud Abdel Aziz, vice president of the state-owned National Bank of Egypt (NBE), said Tuesday Egypt had more than doubled the four banks' capital in the last few weeks with an injection of well over two billion pounds (\$600 million).

"They are increasing their equity to meet capital adequacy requirements according to international trends," he told Reuters in an interview.

Egypt's mammoth state-owned public sector is being dragged reluctantly along a path of free-market reform inspired by the

International Monetary Fund (IMF). Financial markets have been the first affected.

Since the beginning of the year the country has made the pound convertible, allowed banks to set their own interest rates, begun issuing treasury bills and demanded that banks adhere to international financial standards.

Egyptian bankers said the measures had already begun squeezing profits, with the country's approximately 50 private and public banks forced to raise interest rates to attract depositors and hold down lending rates to satisfy borrowers.

Abdel Aziz said NBE's capital was increased to 400 million pounds (\$120 million) from 250 million (\$75 million) last month and that last week the finance ministry, the bank's owner,

approved a second increase to one billion pounds (\$300 million).

Abdel Aziz said the ministry had deposited the funds in the banks earlier this year and would now transfer them to equity.

Western economists said Egypt had apparently financed the capital infusion with cash grants received from Gulf Arab states as a reward for its help in driving Iraq out of Kuwait.

Egypt has been negotiating an IMF accord for more than three years. On Tuesday in IMF delegation left Cairo with a long-awaited "letter of intent" agreement to submit to its board of directors.

The four state-owned banks — NBE, Banque de Cairo, Banque Misr and the Bank of Alexandria — were taken over or created by the state in a wave of nationalisa-

tions that began in the early 1960s.

Economists said some had loans on their books that had not been serviced for decades.

Abdel Aziz said his bank had set aside bad loan provisions of more than one billion pounds (\$300 million), which he said was the highest among public sector banks.

"We are satisfied with our coverage," he said.

A circular to both private and public banks in January set out the country's first mandatory capital-to-assets ratio.

It said capital, reserves and provisions must equal at least eight per cent of total bank assets and set out a two to four year timetable for banks to comply. Mandatory liquidity ratios were also introduced.

IMF: World economy in 1991 may perform worst since 1982

WASHINGTON (R) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects the industrialised world to turn in its worst economic performance since 1982 this year, but looks for a rebound next year. Western diplomats said Tuesday.

The IMF's semi-annual forecast, due to be formally unveiled later this month at the fund's spring meeting, expects economic growth in the industrialised world to slump to 1.4 per cent this year.

That would be the worst performance since the global recession of 1981-82 and compares with growth of 2.5 per cent last year.

The poor performance reflects the impact of the Gulf crisis, particularly the sharp rise in oil prices that followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait last August.

But the IMF expects growth in the industrialised world to pick up next year to about 2.8 per cent, paced by economic recoveries in the United States, Canada and Britain.

Global output, including the developing world, is also expected to pick up in 1992 to about three per cent.

The IMF has scaled back its estimate of global growth this year to take account of the financial fall-out from the Gulf crisis, which triggered a sharp rise in oil prices last year and is generally blamed for pushing the U.S. economy into recession.

In its last published forecast in September, the IMF projected growth of 2.4 per cent this year in both the global economy and the industrialised world.

Diplomats said the IMF gener-

ally agrees with the Bush administration that the U.S. economy will snap out of recession later this year. It expects the U.S. economy to grow 2.8 per cent next year after being flat in 1991.

The economies of both Japan and the former West Germany are likely to expand about three per cent this year. Growth in Japan is likely to pick up slightly next year, but that of the former West Germany will fall to about two per cent.

The IMF is not producing overall forecasts for a united Germany because reliable economic data from the former East Germany is not yet available.

Diplomats said economic growth is expected to slow in former West Germany because the German government was forced to raise taxes to curb the

mounting fiscal deficit.

The IMF expects Canada's economy to bounce back strongly next year, growing at well above three per cent, diplomats said.

The United Kingdom's recovery is expected to be less robust, perhaps on the order of about two per cent.

The world economy is also likely to benefit next year from a turnaround in the Middle East following a steep downturn in 1991 stemming from the Gulf crisis, diplomats said.

Growth in Latin America and the Caribbean is also expected to pick up, to around three per cent in 1992 from about 1.5 per cent this year, they said.

Eastern European economies should stabilise next year after slumping this year and last.

Bonn raises pensions in east, offers incentives to work there

BONN (R) — Bonn announced a 15 per cent rise in pensions in east Germany Tuesday and offered western civil servants extra financial incentives to work in the economically depressed region.

Labour and Social Affairs Minister Norbert Blum said the average east German pension would rise to \$20 marks (\$489) a month from July 1, just over half the average in wealthy West Germany.

"We are transferring to the new federal states a system of old-age care that is without parallel in the world," Blum told a news conference. "This is an important contribution to the social unity of Germany."

East and west Germany united in October 1990. West German pensions law will apply in the five new states of former East Germany from 1992, meaning that pensioners will receive a maximum of 70 per cent

of salary on retirement. But wages are still much lower in the east and it will take years before pensions reach Western levels.

The Grey Panthers, a party representing old people, were unimpressed.

It said east Germans should be guaranteed a minimum pension of 1,200 marks (\$718) to help them cope with rising rents and living costs as communist-era subsidies are phased out.

Other changes mean former members of the hated Stasi security police and other communist officials will effectively have their pensions cut.

Interior Minister Wolfgang Schauble said the monthly salary supplements paid to civil servants who move east to help rebuild central and local government would rise by nearly 800 marks (\$479) a month to a maximum of 2,500 marks (\$1,500).

West German civil servants, around 10,000 of whom are already working in the east, were offered additional incentives such as faster promotion if they accepted such assignments.

"The situation in the new states shows how important an efficient and effective public administration is for the functioning of the economy," Schauble told a news conference.

Local government is barely functioning in some areas and Western companies have cited delays and obstacles in dealing with bureaucracy as factors discouraging them from investing in east Germany.

East German employees of a Western-owned bank published an open letter to the mayor of Dresden Tuesday urging him to deal urgently with their request for permission to build an office in the city. The request was made last summer.

Japan gives Algeria 20b yen credit line

ALGIERS (R) — The Japanese Export-Import Bank opened a line of credit of 20 billion yen (\$148 million) for four Algerian banks under an accord signed in Algiers Tuesday, the official news agency APS reported.

The credits, repayable between two and seven years and available over a period of two years, are to be used to finance imports of Japanese industrial equipment, spare parts, tyres and steel products.

The agency said interest rates would be fixed when each commercial contract is concluded.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES					
Wednesday, April 10, 1991					
Central Bank official rates					
	Buy	Sell			
U.S. dollar	674.0	678.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	496.9	501.9
Pound Sterling	1208.2	1215.4	Dutch guilder	338.8	361.0
Deutsche mark	404.5	406.9	Swedish crown	111.9	112.6
Swiss franc	477.3	480.2	Italian lira (for 100)	54.6	54.9
French franc	119.5	120.2	Belgian franc (for 10)	196.6	197.8

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES			
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.			
One Sterling	1.7892/7902	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1521/26	Canadian dollar	
	1.6685/92	Deutsche mark	
	1.8790/8800	Dutch guilder	
	1.4120/30	Swiss franc	
	34.31/35	Belgian franc	
	5.6420/70	French franc	
	1238/1239	Italian lire	
	135.25/35	Japanese yen	
	6.0330/80	Swedish crown	
	6.5010/60	Norwegian crown	
	6.4075/25	Danish crown	
One ounce of gold	363.65/364.15	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS	
TOKYO — Stocks finished easier in thin trade after moving narrowly around their opening level for most of the day. The Nikkei average was down 48.53 points, or 0.18 per cent, to 26,268.86.	
SYDNEY — Softer overseas markets sent shares lower but prices showed some resilience at sharply weaker levels. The All Ordinaries Index ended down 6.5 at 1,442.6.	
HONG KONG — Shares staged a late rally to claw back from sharp morning losses, ending the day comfortable higher. The Hang Seng Index ended 20.32 higher at 3,777.62.	
SINGAPORE — The roller-coaster Stock Market Index closed mixed after selective bargain hunting in this trading. The Straits Times Industrial Index closed down 9.28 at 1,460.15.	
BOMBAY — Exchange closed till Thursday. On Tuesday, the BSE Index rose 1.83 points to 1,240.53 after peaking at 1,256.80. The National Index gained 2.11 to 621.05.	
FRANKFURT — Shares ended 1.3 per cent lower in thin trading. Edginess about possible further German interest rate rises contributed to general gloom. The Dax Index closed down 20.22 at 1,561.89.	
ZURICH — Shares closed lower as higher Swiss money market rates and Wall Street's 45-point slide on Tuesday weighed on the market. The SPI closed at 1,073.9, down 13.1.	
LONDON — Prices ended easier but above their early lows, reflecting the market's new mood of consolidation after strong gains earlier in the year. The FTSE Index ended down 8.4 at 2,518.8.	
NEW YORK — Blue Chips erased their gains in afternoon trading as some futures-related selling and weak bond prices weighed on the market. The Dow was down about eight at 2,865.	

TODAY AT

Cinema Tel: 677420
CONCORD

PRETTY WOMAN

Show: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 675571
NIJOUR

BAT MAN

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 625155
RAINBOW

Adel Imam & Yusra

in
'Karakon' in the street
(Arabic)

3:30, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 634144
PHILADELPHIA

MICKEY ROURKE...IN A PRAYER FOR THE DYING

12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 699238
PLAZA

FUNNY FAMILY

Show: 12:30, 3:15, 8:00, 10:00 p.m.

Manila seeks \$84m in war reparations

MANILA (R) — The Philippines will seek about \$84 million in reparations to recover losses incurred due to the Gulf war, foreign affairs officials said Tuesday.

The claims will be filed with the United Nations as soon as documentation is completed, Sedfrey Ordenez, Philippine ambassador to the United Nations told reporters.

The claims include damages to displaced Filipino workers, repatriation expenses by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and the state-owned Philippine Airlines, he said.

The foreign undersecretary for international labour affairs with the Philippines' foreign affairs

department, Israel Bocobo, said 30,000 Filipinos who fled Kuwait after Iraq's Aug. 2 occupation claimed losses totalling \$72 million.

"With the assurances of the U.N. and the Kuwaiti government, and the willingness of the Iraqi government to comply with the U.N. resolutions, I am optimistic of actually collecting some sort of war reparations from Iraq," he told reporters.

"We are seeking exemplary damages and moral damages because of the anguish suffered by (the evacuees)," Bocobo said. There are around 500,000 Filipinos working in the Middle East, most of them in Saudi Arabia.

AVISO A TODOS LOS ESPANOLAS RESIDENTES EN JORDANIA

El proximo 26 de Mayo se celebraran elecciones municipales y autonómicas en Espana. Los espanoles residentes en el extranjero que deseen ejercer su derecho de voto deberan comunicarlo a la Embajada de Espana. A tal efecto seran expuestas a partir de hoy dia 10 de Abril y hasta el dia 17, inclusive, las listas electorales. En este plazo se podra presentar toda reclamacion administrativa sobre la inclusion o exclusion en el censo. Para consultar las listas o para mayor informacion: Embajada de Espana, Primer circulo - C/Reina Zeln, Jabal Amman - Amman, Telf. 622140 / 624187

CAR WANTED

Duty paid. Medium size. JD 5,000 maximum. Call 672346 after 2:30 p.m.

CAR FOR SALE

MITSUBISHI COLT, model 1988, burgundy red, only 15,000 kms, radio/cassette player, duty unpaid. Price: JD 4,000 or best offer. Please call (from Sunday onwards): 644635

USED VCR WANTED TO BUY

Family wants to buy a second hand but good condition video cassette recorder with Pal/Secam and NTSC recording/playback capabilities. If you have one for sale, please phone 663458.

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Parliament gives Gorbachev formal approval to broad executive authority

Ryzhkov suffers heart attack

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov was in hospital Wednesday after suffering a heart attack, increasing doubts about his future as Mikhail Gorbachev prepares to reshuffle his government.

A solemn Gorbachev told the Congress of People's Deputies at the start of its morning session that Ryzhkov, once a close political ally, had been stricken on Tuesday night.

"Last night, Nikolai Ivanovich had a heart seizure, a heart attack. He is in hospital. At the moment there is no threat to his life," the president said.

Later the parliament gave formal approval to broad executive authority for Gorbachev, making him on paper the most powerful leader in Soviet history.

Ryzhkov, 61, had taken an increasingly independent line from Gorbachev and his future place in the new government had been uncertain even before his illness.

A technocrat, Ryzhkov has been under steady attack for his handling of the collapsing economy. He has been prime minister since 1985.

Besides endorsing new powers for Gorbachev, parliament also approved creation of a new en-

forcement body, the Supreme Court of Arbitration, to ensure central laws and decrees are observed. On Tuesday the lawmakers rejected a similar body under a different name.

The constitutional changes will place under Gorbachev's control a cabinet made up of the prime minister and his deputies, the heads of ministries and republican leaders.

The formal approval now shifts the battle for control to the 15 constituent republics, many of which have said they will resist any infringement of their rights.

Those filling the new posts have not yet been named.

Once regarded as a moderate reformer, Ryzhkov has emerged lately as a powerful opponent of radical change in Soviet society and has increasingly turned to conservatives and the military for support.

Communist Party politburo member Gennady Yanayev told a news conference that "psychological pressure" on Ryzhkov had contributed to his illness, a reference to demands for his resignation.

"Although the heart attack suffered by Nikolai Ryzhkov does not threaten his life, his condition requires constant



Nikolai Ryzhkov

medical attention," Yanayev was quoted by TASS as saying.

Parliament sent Ryzhkov a telegram wishing him a speedy recovery.

The prime minister's sudden illness follows the surprise resignation last week of Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, depriving Gorbachev of two of the leading architects of his perestroika reform programme.

Gorbachev told delegates he had met for four hours with

leaders of most of the constituent republics and worked out an agreement to ensure reliable supplies of food and agricultural stocks for 1991.

The Soviet president said progress was made on forging an economic agreement for next year, an interim measure needed because a new union treaty, linking the centre to the republics, is unlikely to win quick approval.

"We have reached an agreement on all points concerning the distribution of food," Gorbachev said in brief remarks, noting the session had been "difficult."

The breakdown of central authority has upset the fragile economic order, disrupting supply lines, blurring prices and touching off demands for local control of resources. The result has been economic chaos and the collapse of living standards.

Representatives of Estonia and Lithuania did not attend the session. Latvia, also seeking full statehood, took part.

Gorbachev said it was agreed that state orders, once the backbone of the "command" economy, would be maintained for agricultural supplies.

Other key points in the economic accord would be worked out in the next two days, he said.

Romania deports former king hours after arrival in Bucharest

BUCHAREST (AP) — Former King Michael was deported less than 12 hours after arriving on his first visit to Romania since the Communists forced him into exile 43 years ago.

Speaking to reporters at Bucharest's Otopeni Airport early Wednesday morning, the 69-year-old Michael termed his expulsion from Romania "a rather sorry state of affairs."

The former king, who is of the house of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen and related to Britain's royal family, returned exactly one year after former Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife Elena were summarily tried and executed.

Since then, Michael had been refused a visa several times by the National Salvation Front (NSF) government, which took power during last December's revolution and won subsequent elections. Government officials were thought to be displeased by the monarchist nostalgia the visit could stir.

Michael and his entourage arrived in Zurich, Switzerland at 0720 GMT Wednesday, some four hours after leaving Romania.

The episode began Tuesday at 6 p.m. (1600 GMT) when the former monarch's private plane arrived at the airport from Switzerland, where he lives in exile. Michael was accompanied by his wife, Ana De Bourbon-Parme, daughter Sophie, and several journalists and aides. They were met by another daughter, Margarita, who was already in Romania on a visit.

The family and their entourage then sped off in two waiting Romanian Aero jets. Sources close to the family said they were headed for a monastery at Curtea de Arges, some 140 kilometres west of Bucharest, where many royal family members are buried.

Michael was to attend a mass there Wednesday before leaving Romania Wednesday night, the sources said.

But the Interior Ministry issued a statement soon after the group left the airport, saying that the three family members had arrived without visas and "crossed the border fraudulently."

According to entourage member Constantin Brincovanu, a Manchester (England) University historian, the group was stopped by a roadblock of some 30 police cars just before reaching the industrial city of Pitesti, about 40 kilometres from the monastery.

A police convoy escorted the group back to Bucharest, stopping on the main highway near the airport exit. Brincovanu said the convoy stopped when Michael refused to continue after being told he was to be deported on a military plane, as his aircraft "had been sequestered by the government."

After several hours' delay during which half the main highway was blocked, the convoy proceeded to the airport, where another delay of several hours took place while Brincovanu and other aides argued with airport officials.

Sophie insisted that Michael had received a visa.

"My father received a visa just like this one," she said, displaying her passport with a separate stamped visa document. She said officials took Michael's diplomatic Danish passport back after the frontier had formally been crossed.

Michael, speaking to reporters from inside his jeep, said he thought he had a visa when he "received a piece of paper with a

stamp in it."

"I really don't understand what's the matter with them," he said, as Sophie wept at his side. "It seems to me a very unusual way of doing things."

Danielle Maillefer, a spokeswoman for Michael, said Romanian Premier Petre Roman "strongly advised him not to come, but did not give a firm yes or no." She said Michael "felt he has a role to play in Romania," and so decided to ignore Roman's advice.

Around 3 a.m. (0100 GMT), the two jeeps were taken to the runway after a spokesman for the royal family said Michael's position was that he would "not leave by any plane other than his own except by force."

About 50 soldiers were summoned to the scene to block access to the runway. At 5.40 a.m. (0340 GMT) a Soviet-made Antonov-24 military plane took off for Switzerland with the entourage aboard, airport officials said.

The former king ruled Romania twice for short periods. He first succeeded his grandfather Ferdinand in 1927 as Michael I, after his father, Carol, was excluded from the succession.

Carol acceded to the throne in 1930 and ruled for 10 years. Michael was then crowned again and reigned until he was forced to abdicate when the Communists took power in 1947.

During World War II, he ruled briefly under Gen. Ion Antonescu who was allied with the axis by Nazi Germany. Michael is seen as important in the 1944 coup that removed Antonescu, allowing Romania to change sides and support the allies. He helped install a government with a token Communist presence. The Communists rigged elections in 1947 and forced Michael to abdicate.

COLUMN

Heston: Epic films will be obsolete

NEW YORK (AP) — Actor Charlton Heston predicts that epic films like Ben Hur or Lawrence of Arabia will soon be as obsolete as silent movies. The movie, "Honey, I Shrunk The Kids" cost more than Ben Hur, so that means they don't make movies like that," Heston said in an interview this week on the syndicated television show Personalities. "They will never make a Lawrence of Arabia again. They will never make Bridge On The River Kwai again, which is too bad," Heston said. "But we got to make those movies and I'm glad we did. 'People make fewer films now,' Heston said. Heston, 67, also decried the high price of a movie ticket. "You know, I just found out — because I get into a lot of movies for free — that they're charging \$7 to go to a movie in Los Angeles now. Now, that's terrible." Heston won an Academy Award for his role as Judah Ben Hur. The film, about Roman rivalries in Jesus' day, is known for an 11-minute chariot race that Heston has said is the greatest action sequence ever filmed.

Iglesias 'knows his limitations'

NEW YORK (AP) — Singer Julio Iglesias says he knows his limitations and that means his world is on a sound stage, not a movie set. Iglesias said he decided not to pursue an acting career because "I am the worst actor on earth," the singer confessed in an interview on The Joan Rivers Show. "I did a film 20 years ago and when I saw the film again, I felt guilty and embarrassed," he said. "I need to sing," Iglesias told Rivers, but "I don't need to spend two hours singing in a movie." Iglesias admits he would "love to do that — it's such a nice situation to be an actor," but he says, "I can't make it."

Goodfellas named best film by New York critics

NEW YORK (AP) — The mafia film Goodfellas, its director, Martin Scorsese, and its co-star, Robert De Niro, have won top awards from the New York film critics. Goodfellas, based on Nicholas Pileggi's book Wiseguy about a hood named Henry Hill who turns on his former pals and joins the federal witness protection programme, was named Best Movie of the Year by the group, comprising 28 critics for New York-based publications. Scorsese was named Best Director for Goodfellas. De Niro was named best actor for his work in that film and in Awakenings, in which he plays a coma patient who awakens years later. Ruth Frazer Jhalvalla won for Best Screenplay for Mr. and Mrs. Bridge, the story of an affluent mid-America family starring Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward. Woodward, who plays Mrs. Bridge in the film, was named Best Actress. "The Best Supporting Actress award went to Jennifer Jason Leigh for Miami Blues and Last Exit to Brooklyn, a harsh and startling look at the Brooklyn waterfront during the 1950s. Bruce Davison of Longtime Companion, a poignant portrait of a group of homosexual friends living through the AIDS crisis, won the award for Best Supporting Actor. The critics gave an award for best first film to Whit Stillman, director of Metropolitan, about the existential meanderings of Park Avenue preppies.

Actor 'did not' rob his driver

CHICAGO (AP) — Patrick Lilley, the actor who played Eddie Munster in the 1960s television series, The Munsters, has pleaded innocent to charges that he robbed his limousine driver outside a suburban gas station. Lilley, 37, of Gardena, California, entered the plea before Dupage County Circuit Judge Edward Koval. The actor and John P. Sullivan, 32, of Chicago, were in a rented limousine on Nov. 2 when they allegedly robbed the driver of \$140, authorities said. Lilley, who used the stage name Butch Patrick in the hit television series, was in the Chicago area making appearances at Halloween parties. Police said no weapons were involved in the robbery. Sullivan also has pleaded innocent.

Right-to-die patient dies in U.S.

MOUNT VERNON, Missouri (AP) — Nancy Cruzan, an auto crash victim who lay severely brain-damaged for years while a landmark right-to-die battle was waged around her, died Wednesday, 12 days after her feeding tube was removed.

Ms. Cruzan, 33, died at the Missouri Rehabilitation Centre at 3:28 a.m. local time (0928 GMT), said hospital spokeswoman Barbara Shown.

The tube that had sustained Ms. Cruzan for eight years in what doctors described as an irreversible vegetative state had been removed at her parents' request after a three-year legal battle that produced the U.S. Supreme Court's first right-to-die ruling.

In its 5-4 decision in June, the high court blocked Joe and Joyce Cruzan from withholding food and water from their daughter in the absence of "clear and convincing" evidence she would have wanted to die.

After former co-workers of Ms. Cruzan testified they recalled her saying she would never want to live "like a vegetable," a state judge ruled such evidence existed, and he gave permission Dec. 14 to remove the tube.

Doctors had said the death would be painless. Anti-euthanasia activists went to court seven times to try to force the state to resume feeding Ms. Cruzan but were turned back each time for lack of legal standing.

Nineteen demonstrators were arrested Dec. 18 when they stormed the hospital in an attempt to reattach the feeding tube, which had been implanted in the woman's stomach.

About a dozen demonstrators sang carols and prayed outside on Christmas Day as police watched. "If you're out to save someone's life you just go do it, whether it's in the middle of dinner or at Christmas," said Rob Rousseau of Portland, Oregon.

Ms. Cruzan, who once cared for severely handicapped children at a centre in Joplin, was driving home from her job at a Carriage cheese plant on Jan. 11, 1983, when her automobile ran off the road and overturned. She was found face down a ditch. Paramedics restarted her heart, but she had stopped breathing for about 15 minutes and suffered severe brain damage. She was given a feeding tube but wasn't put on a life-support system such as a ventilator.

Ms. Cruzan lingered in a persistent vegetative state — her body rigid, her feet and hands constricted and bent, her fingernails sometimes digging into her wrists. Her eyes opened and moved erratically at times, but doctors said she was as unconscious as someone in a coma and had no prospects for recovery. She suffered from seizures, vomiting, bleeding gums and diarrhoea. Her care at the state-run hospital cost Missouri taxpayers \$112,000 a year.

Chinese remember Mao, not always respectfully

PEKING (Agencies) — The line was mercifully short Wednesday as a bitter wind whipped around the Mao Tse-Tung Memorial Hall, where the late Communist revolutionary's body lies under glass.

Even on Mao's birthday, few ordinary Chinese seem interested in remembering their former leader, who died 14 years ago. When they do remember, it's often not respectfully. There's a joke that says senior leader Deng Xiaoping, seeking advice, telephoned the late Premier Chou-En-Lai in heaven and Mao in hell.

When Deng got the bill, there was a huge charge for the long-distance call to heaven but no charge for calling Mao. "Local calls are free," the operator explained.

Other jokes make fun of Mao's infatuation in the 1930s with the B-movie actress Jiang Qing, for whom he divorced his wife. He married Jiang, who became the screaming, violence-inciting policewoman of the arts during the 1966-76 radical Cultural Revolution.

The civil strife and economic devastation of the Cultural Revolution remain the main blight on Mao's image as leader of the Communist struggle against imperialism and founder of what is officially called new China.

During the reformist 1980s, Mao's heirs to power were too busy dismantling his farming communes and rebuilding the legal structures he destroyed to spend much time commemorating him.

But since the party — widely nicknamed the "old man's party" for its preponderance of leaders aged 70 and above — was challenged by huge pro-democracy demonstrations last year, Mao has made a bit of a comeback in official circles.

Conservatives who blame Deng for slackening social discipline have quoted Mao as a weapon in internal power struggles. Deng's supporters, instead, portray him as developing "Mao Tse-Tung thought."

The battle continued Wednesday as the party newspaper, People's Daily led its front page with an essay by retired conservative Bo Yibo, 82. Bo urged more efforts to propagate Mao Tse-Tung thought as a sacred historical mission, and pointedly omitted any mention of Deng as Mao's successor.

Activities to mark the birthday were more numerous than in recent years, and included performances of Mao's poetry set to music and scholarly forums on Mao thought.

The People's Daily said a new book has been published compiling remarks by Mao that could apply to the recent collapse of socialism in other countries, reflecting the party's position that his ideas remain a living, relevant force.

At the Mao memorial in Tiananmen Square, however, there was nothing to mark the day as different from any other. "Line up four across," a museum guard barked at Chinese visitors, most speaking in out-of-town accents, who waited to enter at mid-morning. They filed through in groups of about 50, one group every five minutes or so, many ignoring the sign at the door that advised, "please take off your hat."

Guards allowed visitors little time to pay respects to Mao, who lies under a national flag in a glass coffin. Only his face, prematurely pink and shiny, is exposed. Visitors were ushered along the sides of the room, separated from the coffin by at least 10 feet (3 metres) of space and large, clear plastic partitions.

Memorial officials said attendance for the day was about 17,000, but the figure seemed exaggerated. Souvenir vendors outside, selling plastic thermometers bearing Mao's picture and Mao Tse-Tung Memorial Hall chopstick sets, say daily attendance is generally under 5,000.

The memorial was closed for most of 1989, ostensibly so that the building could be repaired. However, a Westerner who first saw Mao's body several years ago said it appeared repairs also were made to Mao, giving a more plastic look.

Officials said Mao's one surviving son, one of two daughters and three grandchildren visited the memorial and brought flower wreaths, as they do each year. Ordinary visitors were not allowed to see the family, who are rarely mentioned in the official media.

It was not known if Mao's widow, Jiang, now 74 and believed still in prison, marked the day in any way.

Filming recently began in Peking of yet another movie about Mao, following several similar war-era epics last year. The new movie, about the death of a son in the Korean War, will try to show a new side of the Stern leader, his human face and love for his family, the studio said.

Another side, indeed. A scene shot in the ballroom of the historic Peking Hotel had Mao and several dozen aides, all in their 50s and 60s, fox-trotting with a host of pigtailed teen-age girls. Jiang was not there.

Meanwhile China's reclusive senior leader, Deng, whose long absence from public view has fuelled speculation about his health, was officially reported to have cast his vote in local elections Wednesday.

"Braving a chilly winter wind, the 86-year-old Deng, wearing a dark grey suit, walked vigorously to the polling centre," the New China News Agency said.

Deng marked his ballot paper inside Zhongnanhai, the guarded, vermilion-walled compound in central Peking that encloses the Communist Party and government headquarters.

Deng voted with a "beaming smile on his face," the agency said. Foreign journalists were not present.

The report appeared aimed at dismissing rumours that Deng, who last made an appearance in July, was seriously ill and in hospital.

Tension soars between Baltics, military

MOSCOW (R) — The commander of the Soviet Baltic fleet warned Wednesday that relations between the armed forces and pro-independence local officials in the three Baltic republics had reached flashpoint.

In a passionate speech before the Congress of People's Deputies, Admiral Vitaly Ivanov said officers in Latvia were being denied residence permits and apartments and their children were being shut out of local schools.

"The extremists are creating conditions so that servicemen will have to use arms to defend their families and children," the admiral said in the latest warning that the armed forces were prepared to use their might in the rebellious republics.

"However we remain calm when Molotov cocktails are being thrown from passing cars, when shots are fired from cars at our guards? These are our children, against whom weapons are being used."

Baltic leaders are bracing for the worst, with some deputies to the Lithuanian parliament sleeping in the government building for fear of an army takeover. Latvian and Estonian officials have also begun preparations for possible presidential rule backed up by the armed forces.

Tiny Luxembourg faces huge task of EC presidency

LUXEMBOURG (AP) — With war looming in the Gulf, world trade talks in disarray and Europe in full transformation, any nation taking up the leadership of the European Community might be dwarfed by the challenges ahead.

But being dwarfed is nothing new for Luxembourg, a tiny speck on the map with only about 0.1 per cent of the population in the 12-nation trade bloc.

Jacques Santer, prime minister of the 378,400 Luxembourgers, is convinced the mouse will roar again when his country takes over the Community's presidency on Jan. 1.

The grand duchy has a good track record in handling the rotating six-month EC presidencies.

"During all our presidencies we always came up with results," Santer said in a recent interview. Five years ago, the Luxembourg presidency paved the way for the single European act, an updated constitution that pushes the trade bloc toward creating a truly unified market after 1992.

This time around, new initiatives to create economic, monetary and political union in the EC by the turn of the century have been thrust into Santer's lap.

The Christian Democrat plans to go between the EC's powerhouses — Germany, France and Britain — to finalise the blueprint for European unity.

Paradoxically, Santer said, small is beautiful in international politics.

"Because we are so small, the others do not suspect us of having ulterior self-serving motives," which can only help in negotiations to bring straying EC members back in line, he said.

"It is clear that we have no imperialist ambitions: Our only ambition is to serve the Community."

Shoeborned between Germany, France and Belgium, the grand duchy occupies a key crossroads on the continent, straddling Europe's main cultures — the Romance and Germanic. It is also well connected with both the rich north and poor south in the Community.

"So we know what Europe feels. Now we are like a referee looking for a possible compromise," Santer said.

But the Gulf crisis might prove the first test of Luxembourg's mettle just after it takes over the presidency from Italy on Jan. 1.

The EC has said it would not hold talks with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz unless the United States first reaches agreement with Iraq on exchange of foreign ministers' visits.

If the EC agrees to talk with Iraq that task would fall to Luxembourg's Foreign Minister Jacques Poos after Jan. 1.

But Santer warned that the "room for manoeuvre is very limited" in the Gulf and new EC initiatives will fully depend on the 12 member states acting in unison.

"We have to stick to international solidarity and cement it further," he said.

However, Luxembourg will be less inhibited in pushing for reforms within the EC.

As a small nation, Luxembourg has reaped the fruits of growing integration and says the only way forward is increased unity — even at the cost of national independence. This pits it against Britain, which has always fought strongly to keep a large measure of sovereignty.

"What is the use of sovereignty when you are isolated," Santer said. "You have to share it."

During Luxembourg's six months, a lot of energy will be spent on two intergovernmental conferences — one on economic and monetary union, the other on political union — to pave the way for a more unified Europe. The presidency holds considerable sway over the proceedings.

One of Santer's first tasks will be to rally the 12 finance ministers behind a plan to merge the member states' monetary policies — a prerequisite for further union. Now, disarray reigns on how fast this should be achieved, and some countries want to hold

South Korea indicts 31 people for plot to overthrow government

SEOUL (R) — South Korea's main internal security agency said Wednesday it had thwarted a socialist conspiracy to overthrow the government that had direct links to North Korea.

The agency for National Security Planning (NSP) said it had indicted 31 people, including college students and a primary school teacher, and issued arrest warrants for 70 others for violating the nation's tough anti-Communist laws.

Those arrested were members of an underground body called the "Chamintong" or Independent National Unification Group, inaugurated in late 1988 to support North Korea's proposals for Reunification of South and North Korea, the NSP said.

North and South Korea, divided at the end of World War II, have been arch foes since the 1950-53 Korean War.

The NSP said the underground organisation used the nationwide radical student alliance Chondachyop as "a front for revolutionary movement" and praised North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung's "juche," or self-reliance, ideology.

"Chamintong sponsored Chondachyop in organising illegal and violent demonstrations on the behind-the-scenes instructions of a camouflaged propaganda group in North Korea," the NSP said in its announcement.

The NSP said evidence of the connection was found in documents that showed the structures of Chamintong and the North Korean group were identical and the two used the same radical slogans and had the same goals.

In late October, 40 students and workers were arrested in the discovery of Socialist plot involving more than 1,600 people, members of the Federation of Socialist Workers.

"Unlike the federation's socialist plot without links with North Korea, this group's movement is directly connected with the North," an NSP official said in a telephone interview.

The investigations of the two groups have shown there are 40 separate underground revolutionary groups split into two main factions, with a membership of at least 10,000 people, the NSP said.

The 31 indicted Wednesday included Song-Suk, Chondachyop's leader now awaiting trial in jail, and eight others arrested by local police on Nov. 21.

They have all been charged with violating the national security law, which prescribes heavy penalties, including death, for pro-Communist activities.

A Chondachyop spokesman strongly criticised the NSP's accusations as groundless, saying: "The announcement is totally distorted and fabricated. Our group has no connection with any other external forces."

"North Korea? Of course not. We just work towards our eventual goal of reunifying the Korean peninsula of our own will," he said in a telephone interview.

The widely-feared security agency is accused by dissidents and opposition leaders of abusing the security law to crack down on political dissent. They say the NSP conveniently uncovers a socialist plot whenever there is a political crisis.

up the process, Santer said. Santer said there are no real alternatives to speedy progress on monetary union.

"Some are chilly" toward the idea of further monetary integration, he acknowledged. "But there is just no other way ahead."

Santer is more vague regarding political union. Calls for an independent EC defence organisation were not realistic, he said, and it remained "essential that we keep a partnership with the United States" within the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

The partnership with Washington has been strained in global trade, where the EC and United States are at odds over the amount of subsidies farmers should get. The EC has resisted U.S. proposals that it reduce internal price supports and export subsidies for farmers.

The agricultural dispute blocked an agreement in world trade talks held in Brussels, Belgium earlier this month. The talks are to resume in Geneva next month.

Santer, stressing the progress that has been made in the other 14 sectors covered by the trade talks, said farming should not block an overall accord. He argued in favour of a final deal that, if need be, excludes agriculture.